Thus Have I Seen

VISUALIZING FAITH IN EARLY INDIAN BUDDHISM



Andy Rotman

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ANDY ROTMAN

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Cover art: Bharhut. Sung Period (circa second century BCE) Pillar Relief, "Adoration of the Buddha" (BHT 15). The cover art depicts a panel from the Buddhist stūpa at Bharhut in central India. The devotees are "all eyes" as they stand with their hands folded in veneration before the shrine for the Buddha's footprints. One figure, flanked by two winged deities, touches the right footprint in worship. According to the inscription on the right border (Luders 1963:87–88), this is likely the divinely born Arahaguta. The pillar containing this image is housed in the Indian Museum in Kolkata. Printed with permission from the ACSAA Color Slide Project.

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Printed in the United States of America
on acid-free paper

To my parents,
who have always believed in me

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Introduction

It did not seem odd to him that the subway held more compelling things than the famous city above. There was nothing important out there, in the broad afternoon, that he could not find in purer form in these tunnels beneath the streets.

—Don DeLillo, *Libra*

Compared to those faceless hordes of people rushing through the train station, these crazy preposterous stories of a thousand years ago are, at least to me, much more real.

—Haruki Murakami, *Kafka on the Shore*

Although Buddhism is often depicted as a religion of meditators and philosophers, some of the earliest writings extant in India offer a very different portrait of the Buddhist practitioner. In the *Divyāvadāna* ("Divine Stories"), a vast collection of Buddhist moral biographies written in Sanskrit in the early centuries of the Common Era, most lay religious practice consists not of reading, praying, or meditating, but of visually engaging with certain kinds of objects. In these stories, seeing is an integral part of Buddhism, and the ways of seeing described in the text and the results that they generate function as a kind of skeleton key for opening up Buddhist conceptualizations about the world and the ways it should be navigated. These visual practices, moreover, are represented as the primary means of cultivating faith, a necessary precondition for proceeding along the Buddhist spiritual path.

Though discourses of the Buddha are well known for their opening words, "Thus have I heard,"[1] the *Divyāvadāna* presents a different model of transmission and authorization. The traditional invocation is attributed to the venerable Ānanda, acknowledging his direct and aural connection with the Buddha and his teachings. After the Buddha's demise, Ānanda uttered this refrain, establishing his bona fides, and then repeated the Buddha's words so that they could be recorded and preserved for posterity. In the *Divyāvadāna*, however, devotees are enjoined to look, not just hear, and visual legacies and lineages are shown to trump their oral counterparts. As the title to this book suggests, the *Divyāvadāna* is visual literature grounded in a visual epistemology.

The *Divyāvadāna* contains thirty-six avadānas, or stories, along with two sūtras (see appendix for list), and these chronicle the spiritual development of Buddhist devotees with a focus on karmic history.[2] I recently finished a translation of the first half of the text, which is being published simultaneously by Wisdom Publications (Rotman 2008), and there I describe in detail the history and importance of the *Divyāvadāna* as well as the pleasures of the narratives it contains. These stories are excellent resources for studying Buddhism as well as wonderful karmic romps through India and across the cosmos. That volume is intended as a companion to this study, for reading the stories in full provides one with a much more nuanced and holistic sense of the *Divyāvadāna* and its aims.

While compelling as literature, the stories in the *Divyāvadāna* also have the rhetorical power and precision of law. More than half of the stories in the *Divyāvadāna* derive from moral exempla in the *vinaya*—or, monastic code—of the Mūlasarvāstivādins, a branch of Buddhists that flourished in the first half of the first millennium in northwest India. All the stories in the *Divyāvadāna*, however, are invariably meticulous in their language and content, and invariably didactic in their attempts to regulate lay and monastic conduct. This makes the text particularly amenable to a close reading sensitive to its legal reasoning and intent.

The *Divyāvadāna* is also an important object for literary analysis because its stories have circulated widely, first in India and then throughout Asia, as both narrative and narrative art, leaving an indelible mark on Buddhist thought and practice. Many of the stories that appear in the *Divyāvadāna* were translated into Tibetan and Chinese and incorporated into their canonical texts, and there are extremely popular stories, such as the *Sudhanakumāra-avadāna*, for which we have translations and reworkings in Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese, Pali, Khotanese, and a host of other languages.[3] The Sudhana story is also centrally featured among the sculptures at Borobudur, the great Buddhist shrine on Java in Indonesia, joining many other narratives from the *Divyāvadāna* represented at the site (Jaini 1966; Fontein 1981). "No other Buddhist story," writes

Padmanabh Jaini (1966: 534), "seems to have enjoyed such wide popularity." All told, the stories in the *Divyāvadāna* have played an essential role in Buddhist self-understanding for nearly two thousand years.

The practices of "seeing" (*darśana*) in the *Divyāvadāna*, however, are very complex. The pioneering works of Jan Gonda (1969), Lawrence Babb (1981), and Diana Eck (1985) offer preliminary insight into the role of the visual in South Asia, but little has been written about the visual in early Indian Buddhism.[4] In light of more recent scholarship by anthropologists and art historians, as well as scholars of film, photography, colonialism, and nationalism, it is clear that vision and visual systems in South Asia, both past and present, are diverse; that they are socially and culturally constructed; and that they influence what one sees, what one believes, and what one does.[5] While South Asia's visual systems share many common traits, the logic and practice of specific visual systems have yet to be worked out on an individual basis.

This diversity of visual systems and practices means there is little one can take for granted in a study of the visual worlds of premodern India, and it is with this in mind that I begin my analysis of the *Divyāvadāna*. The attempt to work my way up from textual minutiae to larger conceptualizations necessitates detailed analyses, what one reader called a methodology of extremely close reading. Fortunately these narratives are precise and sophisticated—rhetorically, exegetically, and hermeneutically. One can find meaning in a word-choice, omission, or digression, even when such authorial decisions may not have been premeditated. Patient readers who make it to the end of this work will, I hope, be convinced of this.

My analysis of the *Divyāvadāna* is also well annotated with footnotes. I provide the original Sanskrit, Pali, and Tibetan for translated passages, contextualize my arguments with references to Buddhist and Indic materials, and offer various parallels and theoretical insights when appropriate. While I am reminded of Noël Coward's remark that "having to read a footnote resembles having to go downstairs to answer the door while in the midst of making love," the notes that accompany this book should be more satisfying than Coward portends.

Though reading the *Divyāvadāna* closely is a necessary means of data collection, the aim of my project is to document not only what Buddhists write, but also what they are said to do. As mentioned above, much of what they are represented as doing in their religious practice is not reading, praying, or meditating, but visually engaging with certain kinds of objects. As a result, I frequently find myself as a historian doing a kind of anthropology of art, what Alfred Gell (1998: 7) explains as the study of "social relations in the vicinity of objects mediating social agency." This means studying "art as a system

of action" (1998: 6), examining the interplay between images, the forces represented and exerted by these images, and the individuals who interact with them. One could call this network of relations "the power of images," as David Freedberg (1989) does in his book of the same title. Owing to the historical nature of my project, however, I examine these relations primarily as they are embedded in textual culture, trying to link specific visual practices into the specifics of a larger social world.

Yet the visual component of the *Divyāvadāna* is more than just a visual culture with consensus and homogeneity regarding visual practices and processes; it is also a visual economy. The text presents a world in which there are natural laws dictating that certain ways of seeing and objects of sight are spiritually efficacious, and this leads those who recognize these natural laws (i.e., knowledgable Buddhists) to structure and organize their lives and institutions accordingly for additional spiritual benefit. What results is a system in which images participate in a give-and-take "as part of a comprehensive organization of people, ideas, and objects" (Poole 1997: 8), and they are also involved in the production, consumption, and exchange of value. Making sense of this visual economy allows one to address important questions regarding the ways that seeing and visual objects are valued, and how this value is constructed and mediated.[6]

The "value" in this visual economy, however, is neither cash nor hard currency. It is faith. In the *Divyāvadāna,* two forms of faith are mentioned, *śraddhā* and *prasāda*. Each of these varieties of faith is generated in separate visual economies, with different visual practices, visual objects, and mechanisms for creating value. Yet in both cases, seeing certain objects under certain conditions generates faith, and such faith allows one to participate in the moral world of Buddhism. In his work on faith and devotion in Theravāda Buddhism, V. V. S. Saibaba (2005: 133) puts it succinctly: faith "is of paramount importance because it is the preliminary requisite of the whole spiritual endeavor to attain *nibbāna* and [it] also governs all spiritual growth."

Moral Economies and Market Moralities

The moral world of Buddhism in the *Divyāvadāna*, however, turns out to be a moral economy, and faith is what gives one the right to participate in it. Faith is the seed money that allows one to invest in a Buddhist future. It allows one to buy in, creating the possibility for "spiritual growth." To use the analogy of a card game, faith is like the chips one receives to ante up for a first hand. While one can perform good or bad deeds without faith, one does so not as a Buddhist, and the rewards are limited.[7] To be a Buddhist, faith is a requisite. And

once one has faith, one can participate in the Buddhist moral economy, accruing moral value through good deeds.

My use of the term "moral economy" requires some explanation, for it differs from the standard usage. In E. P. Thompson's seminal work on the English working class in the eighteenth century, he examines how and why a time of severe food shortages led that populace to "a pattern of social protest which derives from a consensus as to the moral economy of the commonweal" (1971: 126).[8] "The moral economy," Thompson (1991: 340) explains, "is summoned into being in resistance to the economy of the free market."

In regard to this element of resistance, at least in part, Thompson criticizes the work of Paul Greenough (1982, 1983) on the Bengal famine of 1943–1944. In "The Moral Economy Reviewed," Thompson (1991: 346–347) reprimands Greenough for reconstructing a Bengali value-system that is "holistic" and "allows no space for variety and contradiction." While unjust food shortages created riots in eighteenth-century England, it seems that in Bengal,

> "Food of all sorts lay before their eyes," while people were starving on the streets of Calcutta, "but no one attempted to seize it by force." The attitude of the people was one of "complete resignation," and "they attribute their misery to fate or *karma* alone . . ." (Thompson 1991: 346; citing Greenough 1982)

Thompson describes Greenough's account as a "demoralisation induced by prolonged dearth," but I don't think "demoralisation" is quite the right term. This wasn't a case in which morals or moral principles were corrupted, perverted, or deprived of influence. Families broke apart, with fathers abandoning wives and children, but this was "explicable in terms of Bengali moral conceptions" (Thompson 1991: 347; citing Greenough 1982). As Thompson (1991: 347) concludes, perhaps incredulously, "So deeply are the patriarchal values internalised that the abandoned passively assent to their own abandonment."[9]

While Thompson is doubtful that in twentieth-century Bengal, morality could acquiesce so fully and completely to the market economy—and I am not sure that it does (cf. Appadurai 1984)—such an acquiescence is just what we find in the *Divyāvadāna*. In its stories, the working population doesn't need to impose its morality on the market to make sure it is treated justly; nor does it need to resist the market. The market, with its notions of commodification and exchange, is the accepted template for moral action, so one need not try to make the market *moral* by applying one's moral principles. That would be redundant. The dharma of the laity is, in many ways, already an extension of the rules and regulations found in the market. The moral economy in the *Divyāvadāna* is actually a market morality.

In the *Kanakavarṇa-avadāna,* we also read of a famine, and we are told both its cause and its solution. Long ago, King Kanakavarṇa ruled an incredibly wealthy and enormous kingdom, with eighty thousand cities, 570 million villages, eighteen thousand ministers, and twenty thousand wives. King Kanakavarṇa, the Buddha concludes, "followed the dharma and ruled his kingdom according to dharma."[10]

One day, however, "alone in a secluded place, absorbed in meditation,"[11] it occurred to King Kanakavarṇa, "I really should exempt all merchants from customs and transit fees. I should exempt all the people of Jambudvīpa (Black Plum Island) from taxes and duties."[12] King Kanakavarṇa then enacted his plan, but "from ruling his kingdom in this way for many years, eventually the constellations became misaligned so that the heavens would produce no rain for the next twelve years."[13] Distressed at this terrible predicament, King Kanakavarṇa arranged for all the food in Jambudvīpa to be collected in a single granary and then distributed in equal portions to all the people of Jambudvīpa. There was sufficient food for eleven years, but in the twelfth year "the rice and other means of subsistence collected from Jambudvīpa were finally exhausted, except for a single measure of food that remained in King Kanakavarṇa's possession."[14]

At that time, fortuitously, a bodhisattva in King Kanakavarṇa's realm attained awakening as a solitary buddha. Surveying all of Jambudvīpa with his divine sight, "that lord solitary buddha saw that the rice and other means of subsistence collected from Jambudvīpa were finally exhausted, except for a single measure of food that remained in King Kanakavarṇa's possession. It occurred to him, 'I really should have compassion for King Kanakavarṇa. I really should accept and consume alms from the home of King Kanakavarṇa.' "[15]

So the solitary buddha made use of his magical powers, flew over to King Kanakavarṇa's palace, and asked the king for food. King Kanakavarṇa then addressed his entourage: "Permit me, officers, to grant this last bit of rice that I, King Kanakavarṇa, possess. By this root of virtue (*kuśalamūla*) may all the people of Jambudvīpa be completely freed from poverty."[16] After placing that last bit of food in the solitary buddha's bowl, the king and his followers all prepared to die, succumbing at last to hunger. But then the solitary buddha caused it to rain, for weeks on end, first "soft foods, such as boiled rice, barleymeal, lentils and rice, fish, and meat, and hard foods made from roots, stalks, leaves, flowers, fruits, sesames, candied sugar, molasses, and flour,"[17] and then grains, butter, cloth, and jewels. "Thanks to King Kanakavarṇa," we are told, "all this occurred, and the people of Jambudvīpa were completely freed from poverty."[18]

The cause of the famine in this story is the revoking of taxes. Taxation, as the text makes clear, is both moral and necessary. As a follower of the dharma,

the king maintained taxes, duties, and tariffs, and he helped Jambudvīpa (i.e., the Indian subcontinent) become a thriving and prosperous kingdom.[19] While absorbed in meditation, however, King Kanakavarṇa decides to implement an idea that he thinks is for the good of the people but which, unfortunately, contravenes dharma. Meditation, it seems, should be left to monastics.[20] The king abolishes taxes, perhaps under a libertarian-like notion of taxation as theft. Yet taxation has a moral and divine importance. As a result of this breach of dharma, a twelve-year famine ensues. The king then implements a policy of 100 percent taxation on edible goods, so that he can provide for the poor. He reapportions his kingdom's food in equal measure to his citizens, but the damage, both economic and cosmic, is already done.

The solution to the famine comes in the form of a newly awakened solitary buddha who decides to perform an act of compassion. After eleven years of famine, all the food in the kingdom has been consumed except for a single serving in the king's possession. The solitary buddha then flies to the king so that he can receive that last bit of food. In terms of nutrition, that single measure of food will not save the king or the kingdom. As an offering, however, that food serves as moral payment for a power to effect great change in the natural world. While in other cases such offerings give the donor purchase for a "fervent aspiration" (*praṇidhāna*)—to be reborn in a wealthy family, for example—here the king uses the merit accrued from his offering as the capital to buy his kingdom out of poverty.

The accrued merit is both "root" and "capital" (*mūla*), the basis for future good deeds and attainments, and the purchasing power for current ones. Roots of virtue, Luis Gomez (1996: 332) observes, "are like roots (*mūla*) because, once performed, they remain as the basis for future virtue, and, if properly cultivated, grow, mature, and bear fruit."[21] In this case, as our narrator the Buddha explains, King Kanakavarṇa's offering functioned as a "root" that helped him develop into a buddha.

Yet the term *mūla* also refers to one's investment or financial principal.[22] To use a false cognate, *mūla* here really is the moola, the king's bank of virtue, which allows for the solitary buddha's moral action. King Kanakavarṇa must engage with the solitary buddha in a series of exchanges, first food for merit and then merit for food. King Kanakavarṇa must give to get, but the getting is good when the recipient of one's moral action is such a great "field of merit" (*puṇyakṣetra*) as a solitary buddha.[23] As the Buddha explains,

> If, monks, beings were to know the result of charity and the consequence of offering charity as I know the result of charity and the consequence of offering charity, then at present they would never eat

> their last remaining mouthful of food without giving it away or sharing it, should a worthy recipient of that food be found.[24]

Rather than a demoralization, as Thompson proposed, this famine in the *Divyāvadāna* prompts a remoralization. The king's abolishment of taxes as well as his egalitarian redistribution policy were immoral incursions on the market. The market had it right. Taxes are moral, for they help provide for the kingdom on the ground and among the stars. Taxes should be given to kings just as food offerings should be given to solitary buddhas. Both types of giving help provide for one's self and for one's community, and in both cases the recipients are worthy. The king's redemption comes with his decision to give away his country's last bit of food to a very worthy recipient. By making an offering to a solitary buddha, he earns enough merit to transform a single meal into a bounty sufficient to feed an entire kingdom.

This idea of a market morality, with its emphasis on accruing merit, has similarities to what Melford Spiro (1970) refers to as *kammatic* Buddhism, as opposed to *nibbanic* Buddhism.[25] Kammatic Buddhism is a moral system that emphasizes the performance of good deeds, giving (*dāna*) in particular, in order to accrue merit. The accrual of merit leads to health, wealth, and other such good things in life, and the more merit one accrues, the more of these things one experiences. In kammatic Buddhism, Spiro (1970: 119) writes, one's karma is "the net balance, the algebraic sum, of one's accumulated merit and demerit. If the accumulated merit is the larger, one's karma is good and karmic retribution is pleasurable; if the demerit is larger, one's karma is bad and karmic retribution is painful."

This quantification of merit finds its most obvious material manifestation in the widespread practice of what Spiro refers to as "merit bookkeeping." According to Spiro (1970: 111), "Many Burmese keep merit account books, which at any time permit them to calculate the current state of their merit bank." Similar practices have also been observed in Sri Lanka (Rahula 1956: 254), and most notably in China, where merit accounting became quite popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Brokaw 1991). A particularly detailed account of merit bookkeeping occurs in *The Ledger of Merits and Demerits*, a famous Chinese morality book written in perhaps the twelfth century. There the religious practitioner is instructed as follows:

> As for the way of practice, one should always have a pen, an inkwell and a notebook ready by the head of the bed in the bedroom. First one should write down the month, then write down the day of the month. Under each day, make two columns for merits (*kung*) and demerits (*kuo*). Just before one retires for the night, one should write down the

> good and bad things one has done during the day. Consult the *Ledger* for the points of each deed. If one has done good acts, record them in the merit column. If one has done bad things, record them in the demerit column. One should not just write down good acts and conceal bad ones. At the end of each month count the total of merits and demerits. Compare the two. Either subtract the number of demerits from the number of merits or use the number of merits to cancel out the number of demerits. After subtraction or cancellation, the number of merits or demerits remaining will be clear. (Yü 1981: 120–121)

Judging by such a description, Spiro's metaphor of the "merit bank" to explain an individual's stock of merit is not anomalous. In Chün-fang Yü's description of Buddhism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, she writes that "merit is similar to money" (1981: 122), an observation that holds true for Spiro's account of contemporary Burma and the narratives in the *Divyāvadāna*. Merit in the *Divyāvadāna* is the primary medium of exchange and measure of value for the Buddhist community. It can be earned, stockpiled, transferred, cashed in, and depleted. It is the principal commodity for the Buddhist community, and it is the gold standard for Buddhist morality.

Yet money is also similar to merit. The balance in one's actual bank account is indicative of one's moral standing. Numerous characters in the *Divyāvadāna* "cash in" the merit they've accrued from an offering in order to be reborn "in a family that is rich, wealthy, and prosperous."[26] As Russell Sizemore and Donald Swearer (1992: 4) explain, "Because the law of kamma guarantees that each receives the fate merited by his/her acts and because wealth, being good, is a fit reward for meritorious action, prosperity is a proof of virtue."[27]

The two economies, moral and commercial, don't just mirror each other, they also intersect and interact. Buddhism in the *Divyāvadāna* functions much like a currency exchange, providing places and procedures that allow individuals to exchange one currency for another. Instead of allowing for the conversion of dollars into rupees or rubles, however, it allows one to convert money and moral action into merit, and merit into money and moral attainment. And it offers excellent rates of return. One can accrue merit by giving to Buddhist saints and shrines, and merit can be transformed into roots of virtue for fervent aspirations that promise future wealth, be it economic or spiritual. But currency conversion of this kind isn't something that can be done at one's home. It requires one to visit particular sites and perhaps particular people, both of which I will discuss in what follows.

Such connections between merit and money are also indicative of much larger connections between the moral and economic spheres in Indian

Buddhism. Considering the aforementioned similarities between kings and buddhas,[28] as well as those between royal law and Buddhist law, taxes and almsgiving, it shouldn't be surprising that commercial law and moral law in the *Divyāvadāna* have overlapping jurisdictions.[29] These connections are likewise apparent in the śāstric world of brahmanical texts, which share many ideas with their Buddhist counterparts. The Hindu system of the *trivarga*, for example, poses that the "trinity" of *dharma*, *artha*, and *kāma*—nicely rendered by Wendy Doniger and Sudhir Kakar (2002: xiii) as "piety, profit, and pleasure"—are the three "aims of human life" (*puruṣārtha*). According to the *Arthaśāstra* (1.7.3) and the *Kāmasūtra* (1.2.1), these human aims are "interconnected" (*anyonyānubandham*), and even the *Manusmṛti*, which strenuously advocates the position of dharma, recommends that the three aims be pursued together (Manu ii.224).[30]

Bhartṛhari, a great philosopher of language from perhaps the fourth century, sums up such sentiments about money and merit in the *Divyāvadāna* quite fittingly. He offers counsel about wealth, greed, and propriety, as well as the relative merits of religious life, political power, and amorous pursuits. In one of his deservedly famous epigrams from the *Nītiśataka*, he explains,

> It's the rich man who has high status.
> He's the scholar, the learned and discerning one,
> the only one thought to be an orator and considered handsome.
> Gold carries with it all good qualities.[31]

Buddhism and Mercantilism

In the *Divyāvadāna*, however, Buddhism is more closely connected with mercantile law than with royal law, and the Buddhist practitioner with the merchant, not the king.[32] In nine of the stories in the *Divyāvadāna*, there are strikingly similar accounts of caravans of merchants bringing their goods to the seashore, loading them on ships, and setting off to make their fortunes overseas.[33] Certain images appear again and again: the caravan leader deciding to organize an overseas venture to make money, the long and dangerous caravan journey to and from the ocean, the boatload of merchants docking at Ratnadvīpa (Treasure Island) to collect precious stones, the distraught relative bemoaning the dangers of the sea, and so on. Numerous descriptions and stock passages regarding merchants, trade goods, and maritime commerce are also scattered throughout the text.

There is an unmistakable mercantile ethos in these stories. Most notably, we find the mercantile notion of exchange transposed onto the karmic realm.

This results in a commodification of merit such that characters are represented as buying their way out of future suffering by making the appropriate offerings and thereby accruing a sufficient stock of this bankable virtue. In one story, a boy ensures a good rebirth for himself by paying five hundred *kārṣāpaṇa* coins to have a meal provided for the monastic community (Divy 303.12ff.). Elsewhere, the Buddha answers the mercantile critique that the economics of this karmic materialism are incommensurable, that the great karmic rewards that he promises must be false because they are so far in excess of the meager offerings that he receives (Divy 70.16–71.22). In another instance, the Buddha distances himself from ordinary materialism, refusing a boatload of jewels from five hundred merchants with the protest that he has no use for such worldly goods (Divy 233.7–9)—though in other cases the karmic efficacy of such offerings is given in exacting detail (Divy 481.26–483.21).

It is this preoccupation with mercantilism in its various forms that makes the *Divyāvadāna* so useful for gaining insight into the relationship between the religious and the mercantile. This relationship was integral to the moral and social worlds of Buddhist monasticism, and the discourse that resulted from the dynamics of this relationship left an indelible mark on Buddhist thought and doctrine. Gregory Schopen has already explored this connection within Indian Buddhism in his excellent and prolific work on "Buddhist monks and business matters"—to quote the title of a recent collection of his articles (Schopen 2004). Buddhism had strong connections with the merchant class in India,[34] and these connections helped both Buddhism and mercantilism to flourish.[35]

Unfortunately, it is probably impossible to determine whether the world of the merchant represented in the *Divyāvadāna* was thriving or floundering when these stories were compiled—whether the trade boom during the first four centuries of the Common Era had come or, indeed, had come and gone. Kalpana Upreti (1995: 20), who has written extensively on the *Divyāvadāna*, argues that the text's "exaggeration and hyperbole in describing gifts as well as [the] spiritual merit accruing from them" indicate a "desperate attempt" on behalf of the Buddhist monastic community in northern India to make up for the loss of royal patronage after the fall of the Kuṣāṇa empire and the dwindling of merchant donations as foreign trade waned in the fourth century CE.

Yet this is no more than speculation. Equally plausible is that these stories were written during the halcyon days of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, when foreign trade was booming, and indicate instead that the construction and maintenance of new monasteries were quickly draining their resources; or that the competition for donations from other religious groups was making it difficult for them to raise funds; or, perhaps, that large-scale proselytism required

more financial backing than they were receiving. Many scenarios are possible, and the "desperate attempt" Upreti reads into the text is as speculative as the rest. Since it's also difficult to map out the large-scale demise of foreign trade that took place in the fourth century CE—to pinpoint when and where trade-induced recessions occurred during the late-Kuṣāṇa/early-Gupta period—let alone to determine exactly when and where the *Divyāvadāna* was compiled, any attempt to understand the text's relationship with mercantilism by locating the text chronologically with regard to this trade boom and the fortunes of the Kuṣāṇas will inevitably result in a choice among necessarily hypothetical scenarios.

Instead, we can focus on what we do know more definitively. During the first centuries of the Common Era, throughout much of urban northern India and the Deccan, Buddhism as well as Jainism were intimately connected with the merchant world. The appearance of mercantilist themes and tropes in the *Divyāvadāna* is apparently a reflection of that interaction. Yet the relationship between monastics and merchants in the *Divyāvadāna*, let alone in the world beyond, far transcends a simple give and take. For example, while merchants in the Kuṣāṇa realm functioned jointly in different associations for different ends—guilds for business, "town corporations" (*nigama*s) for politics, and lay associations for charity—the Buddhist monastic community also engaged with the world in all three of these ways but without the convenient tripartite separation that merchants devised for themselves. Frequently these roles blurred together and overlapped.

Recourse to epigraphical and archeological materials is helpful in setting the parameters of how and why monastics and merchants interacted, but it is an examination of these interactions in the *Divyāvadāna* that will help us to use these materials as a component of intellectual history. Only through an examination of the full complement of nontextual and textual materials, an examination that regards each corpus of materials as informing and interacting with the other, can we uncover the gaps for early Buddhists between action and imagination—the tension, that is, between what they did and what they thought they should do.[36] Much of this task, however, is outside of the purview of this book.

Nevertheless, in the chapters that follow, merchants and mercantile ways of thinking will provide an important context for analyzing the text's visual and moral economies. I will also address some of the specificities of merchant-monastic interactions in an effort to make sense of the mechanisms of exchange that helped constitute the social world of Indian Buddhism. These specificities and the reasoning by which they abide are crucial for understanding the kinds of actions that faith entails and the logic that they follow.

Faith and Action

In the *Divyāvadāna*, seeing generates faith, and after a character gains faith, he or she makes an offering, as though the action of giving were the natural and perhaps inevitable outcome of the arising of faith. Though I recognize the danger of what Bernard Faure, following Wittgenstein, refers to as the " 'causal superstition' that leads us to assume the existence of a belief behind every act" (1996: 26; citing Wittgenstein 1979: 4e), the *Divyāvadāna* does describe a causal connection in acts of faith, and not just between belief and act, but between act, belief, and act. Acts of seeing generate the mental states of *śraddhā* and *prasāda*. These mental states, in turn, generate acts of giving. It is the origins and implications of this matrix of seeing-believing-giving that I explore in much of what follows.

Part of the problem in understanding the connection between action and belief, and belief and action, follows from the misconceived notion that *śraddhā* and *prasāda* are forms of belief that require acceptance or rejection, as with the Nicene Creed. As Donald Lopez (1998: 34) writes,

> The problem, then, is not whether belief exists—this is difficult to determine—but whether religion must be represented as something that derives from belief, as something with external manifestations that can ultimately be traced back to an inner assent to a cognitive proposition, as a state of mind that produces practice.

In the *Divyāvadāna,* the mental states of *śraddhā* and *prasāda* do exist, but their existence is not founded on an "an inner assent to a cognitive proposition." The two states are more affective than conceptual, more empirical than theoretical, more faith than reason.[37] They are forms of faith, both transitive and ethical, as well as forms of belief, with elements of trust and confidence.[38]

The entry on "faith" in the *Encyclopedia of Religion* begins by claiming that "FAITH, in probably the best-known definition of it, is 'the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen' " (Pelikan 1987: 250). Yet this citation from Hebrews 11:1, so popular that the author offers no citation, is the antithesis of how one would define *śraddhā* and *prasāda* in the *Divyāvadāna*. These forms of faith require that things *are* seen. Moreover, they involve not just, or even necessarily, assurance and conviction, but action.

In addition to being mental states, *śraddhā* and *prasāda* are also complex bodily practices that involve the performance of ethical deeds.[39] This connection between believing and doing (though not between doing and believing) is well described by Michel de Certeau. His formulation of belief brings us back to issues of value, exchange, and commodification. He asserts that "a belief devoid

of practical implications is not a belief" (1985: 199), and to this end cites Pierre Janet (1928): "For us, belief is nothing more than a promise of action: to believe is to act; to say that we believe in something is to say: we shall do something."

Yet de Certeau also posits a contractual nature for belief, such that the believer, who is in an inferior position with relation to the object of belief, gives something away in the hope of getting something back in the future. To quote de Certeau (1985: 192–193):

> Émile Benveniste recognizes in the functioning of the word *kred* (*credo*)—a function he ranks among "economic obligations"—a sequence linking a donation to remuneration. To believe, he says, is to "give something away with the certainty of getting it back." A coming and going of the "thing" marks, through a separation among moments, that which distinguishes its successive owners. The communication established by the goods put in circulation posits a distinction of sites (the detainers of the "thing") by that of *time*. It temporalizes the relation of the *one* to the *other*. The object of the exchange is itself altered by this distance between moments, since the due—or expected—is not the same as the given, but an *equivalent*: the analogy between the offered and the received would be the work of time on their identity. The sequence of the gift and restitution thus temporarily articulates an economy of exchange. It will develop on the side of *credence*, or "crediting," of the creditor or "believer" and, more explicitly, toward *credit*, where Marx sees "the judgment that political economy bears on the morality of man." (citing Benveniste 1969: i, 171–179 and, on Marx, Bourdieu 1974: 23)

This notion of belief as a practice involved in a moral economy is particularly helpful in explaining the logic of giving in the *Divyāvadāna*. Ritual acts of giving in the text are frequently implicated in belief-practices; they are not simply acts of generosity but acts of belief as "expectational practice" (de Certeau 1985: 195). They are investments, pledges, and securities that guarantee payment in the future. But in the *Divyāvadāna*, to quote Pierre Bourdieu (1999: 240), "the dream of virtue and disinterestedness" frequently disguises the fact that "virtue is a political matter. As he notes, "people have an interest in disinterestedness and generosity," and it is this interest, and the mechanics of this interest, that I try to identify.

In his work on the Zen *imaginaire* in medieval Japan, Bernard Faure recognizes the importance of such interested and expectational practices in shaping Buddhist institutions, but he de-emphasizes the role of belief in these activities. Faure (1996: 284) explains,

> We need to conceive this imaginaire on the mode of the debt and the gift rather than that of belief, as act rather than thought; but also on the mode of gift-giving, as something that breaks the economic circle, moving beyond into pure loss or expenditure.

Though I agree with Faure more generally about the dangers of positing belief as the prompt for action, it is an important aspect of the Buddhist *imaginaire* in the *Divyāvadāna* that *śraddhā* and *prasāda* are represented as prompts for action and prompted by action. These representations, one needs to remember, are also part of a larger discursive strategy to constitute Buddhist morality and ethics. This is, after all, didactic literature.

Hence, while both *śraddhā* and *prasāda* are implicated in systems of belief, they also transcend our notions of "belief." The relationship that characters in the *Divyāvadāna* have with the market morality of Buddhism, for example, bears many similarities with the relationship, in Pierre Bourdieu's analysis, that contemporary consumers have with the market populism of globalization. In a collection of essays entitled *Acts of Resistance: Against the Tyranny of the Market*, Pierre Bourdieu (1998: 29) explains,

> Everywhere we hear it said, all day long—and this is what gives the dominant discourse its strength—that there is nothing to put forward in opposition to the neo-liberal view, that it has succeeded in presenting itself as self-evident, that there is no alternative. If it is taken for granted in this way, this is as a result of a whole labour of symbolic inculcation in which journalists and ordinary citizens participate passively and, above all, a certain number of intellectuals participate actively. Against this permanent, insidious imposition, which produces, through impregnation, a *real belief*, it seems to me that researchers have a role to play.[40] (emphasis added)

Like Bourdieu, I am also interested in how "a whole set of presuppositions is being imposed as self-evident" (Bourdieu 1998: 30), and like the researchers to whom Bourdieu gestures, I am interested in how this "real belief" is inscribed and incorporated into practice and social life. While I don't think that the market morality of Buddhism is an "insidious imposition," I do think that it is, as with globalization in Bourdieu's (1998: 34) analysis, "a powerful discourse, an *idée force*, an idea which has social force, which obtains belief."

My sense is that the *Divyāvadāna* "obtains belief" primarily through the discourses of *śraddhā* and *prasāda*. The former emphasizes that the market morality of Buddhism explains the world "as it really is" (*yathābhūta*), and the latter emphasizes how faith can arise naturally and spontaneously when one

sees certain objects. Taken together, Buddhism has particularly strong claims to truth, and the faith that it requires of its adherents is depicted as easy to obtain. In this configuration, however, Buddhism is especially dependent on seeing, and the role of seeing as a reliable "instrument of knowledge" (*pramāṇa*) and instrument of faith will require considerable attention.

The Specifics

In part I, I describe the practice of *śraddhā*, the causes and conditions that lead to its arising and the subsequent behavior that its arising entails. I begin, in chapter 1, with an analysis of the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, focusing on the close connection between *śraddhā* and seeing. Seeing and *śraddhā* are intertwined, and the discourse of the latter necessitates an understanding of the role of the former for moral action. In chapter 2, I explore the contrast between *śraddhā* and *bhakti*. While the *Divyāvadāna* portrays *bhakti* as a false confidence in divine forces, it represents *śraddhā* as a mental state that arises with regard to trustworthy individuals and with regard to certain "indirect objects" whose truth is professed by those trustworthy individuals. The practice of *śraddhā* begins with a visual confirmation of the truth of certain objects and phenomena, and it culminates in the making of offerings. This connection between seeing and giving, with *śraddhā* as the mediator, results in an epistemological and ethical formulation that engages the problem of karmic materialism. I then discuss the idea of a gold standard of the karmic system, a method of conversion between merit and money, and what it means for the Buddhist believer.

In part II, I describe the practice of *prasāda*, which like *śraddhā* originates with a visual interaction and culminates in giving, but which suggests a different epistemology, for it arises without one's consent or even, necessarily, one's awareness.[41] It also suggests a different sociology of practice, both in terms of eligible participants and the visual objects engaged. In discussing the specifics of this practice, I consider *prasāda* as a mental state—why it arises, in whom it arises, and what its arising leads to—as well as the various "agents of *prasāda*" (*prāsādika*) and the visual medium through which they operate.

In chapter 3, I discuss the meaning of *prasāda*, the domains in which it operates, and its connection with the visual. As Kanga Takahata (1954: 24) observed, "the central idea of the avadāna literature is cittaprasāda or spiritual cleansing, and what is inseparable from this is the practice of dāna or charity." Following this insight, I discuss *prasāda*-initiated offerings, the intention with which they are made, and the implications this has for Buddhist notions of charity. In chapter 4, I consider *prasāda* as praxis, and how beggars, gods, kings,

and monks engage with it, try to engage with it, or ignore it. I then discuss the issue of the agency of *prasāda* and its significance for Buddhist ethics.

An individual's karma is represented as a closed system in the *Divyāvadāna*, and only an outside agent can generate a karmic intrusion that will allow one to escape from one's karmic destiny and the inevitable suffering of saṃsāra. Just as Isaac Newton, in the first of his three laws of motion, recognized that every object in a state of uniform motion tends to remain in that state of motion unless an external force is applied to it, so too with individuals and their karmic fate. Individuals are destined to live out their karma and suffer, lifetime after lifetime, reaping precisely what they have sowed, unless there is a karmic intervention to alter the vector of their lives. Newton's assertion is also known as the Law of Inertia, for objects, much like individuals in the *Divyāvadāna*, possess an inertia that causes them to remain in that state of motion—or being—unless an external force acts upon them. Within the text, *prasāda* is just such a force, and it allows one to escape one's fate and embark on the Buddhist path toward liberation.[42]

In chapter 5, I continue an analysis of *prasāda*, first focusing on the Toyikā story, which offers an egalitarian vision of the practice of *prasāda* in a time after the Buddha's final nirvāṇa. This account offers additional insight into the specifics of ritual action and the construction of shrines, and the importance of proximity and place for the mechanics of *prasāda*. This configuration of *prasāda* stresses a logic of presence, and the geography of practice that emerges may offer a subaltern perspective on early Buddhist pilgrimage. In chapter 6, I discuss the aesthetics and erotics of *prasāda* and how these help to explain the compelling power that *prasāda* exerts, both in objects and in people, and its apparent naturalism. Last, I consider the various connections between giving, karmic status, and social status, and the insights this might offer into the prestige economy of Buddhism.

In part III, in an effort to develop a more complex understanding of the visual world of the *Divyāvadāna*, I examine practices of seeing the Buddha that are outside of the typologies of *śraddhā* and *prasāda*. In the discourse of *śraddhā*, seeing produces a moving experience that is both cognitive and emotive, and it generates in the viewer a strong conviction in the efficacy of giving. Within the mechanism of *prasāda*, seeing is an affair of "the flesh," to use Merleau-Ponty's language. It is like a form of touch, "an action by contact—not unlike the action of things upon the blind man's cane" (Merleau-Ponty 1964: 170). This form of seeing has a visceral immediacy that creates in the viewer an unselfconscious and compelling urge to give. But the *Divyāvadāna* also contains other forms of seeing that are less immediate and visceral, and require more mental intermediation on the part of the viewer. Special practices are required, for instance, to

see the Buddha after his death, when his physical form has been cremated and his remains distributed as relics.

In chapter 7, I return to the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* and consider what monastics say about seeing the Buddha and what they do when confronted with the opportunity. I then focus on two accounts from the cycle of stories about King Aśoka that address the problem of how to see the Buddha's physical body after he has passed into final nirvāṇa. The first concerns King Aśoka and the logistics of pilgrimage, and the second involves Upagupta and the veneration of images. In chapter 8, I reflect further on the role of images in Buddhist worship, and what the sculptures and paintings on Buddhist monuments in South Asia may be able to tell us about the "ways of seeing" (Berger 1977) of premodern Buddhist practitioners. Seeing Buddhist art, it seems, involved quite a bit of listening. Lastly, I consider more broadly the world of the visual in the *Divyāvadāna* and offer some suggestions with regard to the social and political transformations that may account for its construction.

There are a number of threads that I try to tie together in these chapters—*śraddhā* and *prasāda* as both mental states and practices, notions of exchange, and the realm of the visual. But the moral universe of the *Divyāvadāna* is a dense and intricate weave, and although much of what follows involves close philological work in juxtaposition with more synthetic theorizing, this book as a whole is more of a prolegomenon to the study of visual and moral economies in Buddhism than a definitive account. With this in mind, in the epilogue I offer a few concluding remarks as to the significance of this project and then address some of the questions that linger. Buddhist philosophers and sociologists, cultural, intellectual, and art historians will certainly have more to add to my conclusions, clarifying a practice with reference to a text, image, or inscription, qualifying a hypothesis through ethnographic data, or perhaps deliberating more broadly on faith as a visual and seemingly involuntary practice. I only hope that I can encourage such a wide variety of scholars to engage with my work.

PART I

The Practice of *Śraddhā*

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I

Seeing and Knowing

If, before our eyes, we see someone who is truly suffering, we do sometimes feel his suffering and pain as our own. This is the power of empathy . . . The reason that people sing songs for other people is because they want to have the power to arouse empathy, to break free of the narrow shell of the self and share their pain and joy with others.

—Haruki Murakami, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*

For the relationship between the laity and the Buddhist monastic community to be properly maintained, the laity must feel that it receives sufficient karmic merit in exchange for its offerings of material goods and that the merit it accrues won't diminish or decay. Without this belief, a major catalyst for lay offerings to the monastic community would simply disappear. But how can one verify the contention, so fundamental for Buddhism's market morality, that offerings to the monastic community produce good karma for the donor and that karmic payback or payoff is inevitable? The Buddha, whom the text touts as the ultimate authority in such matters, explains,

> Actions never come to naught,
> even after hundreds of millions of years.
> When the right conditions gather and the time is right,
> then they will have their effect on embodied beings.[1]

But how can one be sure?[2]

What often precedes the recitation of this maxim in the *Divyāvadāna* is a narrative in which lay characters develop the form of belief known as *śraddhā* in two related phenomena: the commensurability of the karmic system and the efficacy of making offerings to monastics as a means to progress within that system. This mental state of *śraddhā*, however, does not simply arise when these phenomena are described, as I have just done. These phenomena must also, in a literal and ekphrastic sense,[3] be seen. In what follows, through a close examination of the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, the first avadāna in the *Divyāvadāna*, I will discuss this experience of *śraddhā*—the necessary conditions for its cultivation and its close connections with visuality.

The *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*: Karma Described, Karma Induced

The *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* is a complex narrative. In its thematization of *śraddhā*, it deals with how the doubting nature of mortals can be overcome, how unvirtuous individuals can be convinced of the error of their ways, and how unvirtuous characters who have died can be provided for. Before discussing these issues, however, I will summarize a lengthy but important section of the story.[4]

After returning home with a boat full of jewels from Ratnadvīpa (Treasure Island), the caravan leader Koṭikarṇa is accidentally stranded by his caravan on the shores of the ocean. Koṭikarṇa then sets off on his own and soon finds himself in a giant iron city surrounded by five thousand hungry ghosts begging him for water.

> "Friends, who are you?" he asks. "What deed led you to be reborn here?"
>
> "Śroṇa, the people of Jambudvīpa are difficult to convince. You won't have *śraddhā* [in us]."
>
> "Friends, I can see what's before my eyes. Why wouldn't I have *śraddhā* [in you]?"[5]

The hungry ghosts then explain that they had been insolent and had not given alms, and for this reason have come to the ancestral realm. Koṭikarṇa departs, and soon enters another iron city full of hungry ghosts where he engages in the same exchange as above with a crowd of thousands of its inhabitants. They explain that they were reborn as hungry ghosts because they had been full of pride and had not given alms.

Koṭikarṇa then continues on his way and meets a man on a flying mansion who is making love with four nymphs. The man gives Koṭikarṇa food and

drink and then tells him to leave because danger is imminent. Koṭikarṇa gets down off the flying mansion, and as the sun rises, the flying mansion and the nymphs disappear. In their place appear four black-spotted dogs that flip the man over and begin ripping the bones out of his back and devouring them. At sunset, the dogs disappear. The flying mansion then reappears along with the four nymphs, and the man once again begins to make love with them.

Koṭikarṇa asks this man as well what deed he had done to be reborn there, and he too responds that the people of Jambudvīpa are difficult to convince and that he won't have *śraddhā* [in him]. Once again Koṭikarṇa says, "I can see what's before my eyes. Why wouldn't I have *śraddhā* [in you]?"[6] The man then explains that he had been a shepherd who butchered sheep by day, and although the noble Mahākātyāyana couldn't convince him to stop doing this completely, he was convinced enough to follow the Buddhist "moral code" (*śīlasamādāna*)[7] at night. As a result of following the moral code at night, he now experiences divine pleasure at night, and as a result of butchering sheep during the day, he experiences suffering during the day. The man then requests Koṭikarṇa to go and see his son who also butchers sheep for a living.

> "Tell him, 'I have seen your father. He says that the consequence of this deed will be most undesirable. Stop this evil practice that goes against the true dharma!' "
>
> "Friend, as you said before, 'The people of Jambudvīpa are difficult to convince.' He won't have *śraddhā* [in me]."
>
> "Śroṇa, if he doesn't have *śraddhā* [in you], tell him, 'Your father says that underneath the slaughtering pen a pot full of gold is buried. Retrieve it and use it to enjoy yourself fully. And from time to time offer alms to the noble Mahākātyāyana and then direct the reward in our names. Maybe then this bad karma will diminish, give out, and finally be exhausted.' "[8]

After this exchange, Koṭikarṇa continues on his way. At sunset, he meets another man making love with a nymph on a flying mansion. The same basic conversation occurs, and then at sunset, the flying mansion and the nymph disappear. In their place appears a giant centipede that wraps itself around the man and begins to eat his head. At sunrise, the centipede disappears. The flying mansion then reappears, along with the nymph, and the man once again begins to make love with her. Then more or less the same conversation as in the previous episode ensues, except that in this case, the man explains that he had been a brahman adulterer. He then asks Koṭikarṇa to inform his son, who is also an adulterer, that the consequence of this deed will be undesirable and that he should stop this evil practice. If his son doesn't have *śraddhā*

[in him], he explains, Koṭikarṇa should tell his son that there is a pot of gold buried underneath the fire altar for the *agniṣṭoma* sacrifice. He should use it to enjoy himself fully as well as to make offerings and direct the reward in their names.

Koṭikarṇa continues on his way once again until he meets a woman on a flying mansion along with four hungry ghosts bound to the four corner-posts of her bed. The woman feeds Koṭikarṇa and then enters the flying mansion. In the meantime, Koṭikarṇa feels compassion for the four hungry ghosts and tries to feed them, but whatever food he gives them turns, respectively, into dung beetles, iron balls, flesh, and pus and blood. When the woman reemerges, Koṭikarṇa asks her what deed she did to be reborn there. As before, she replies that the people of Jambudvīpa are difficult to convince and that he won't have *śraddhā* [in her]. Koṭikarṇa again counters that seeing what is before his eyes, why wouldn't he have *śraddhā* [in her]. Following this now formulaic interaction, she tells of the misdeeds of the four hungry ghosts around her, who were previously her husband, son, daughter-in-law, and maidservant. She also explains how she had been a virtuous brahman woman, but because of making an improper fervent aspiration was reborn as a hungry ghost, though one of great power. She then asks Koṭikarṇa to inform her daughter, who is a prostitute, that the consequence of such an action is undesirable and that she should therefore stop this evil practice. Likewise, she explains that if she doesn't have *śraddhā* [in him], Koṭikarṇa should tell her that in the old house where her father used to live there is a golden water-pitcher and four iron jars filled with gold. She should use this to enjoy herself fully as well as to make offerings and direct the reward in their names.[9]

That night, while Koṭikarṇa is asleep, the woman arranges for him to be transported back to his family's park in the village of Vāsava. When he wakes up, the first things he sees are the inscribed items that his parents left there for his speedy return or auspicious rebirth. Concluding that his parents think that he is dead, he decides to join the Buddhist monastic community. Mahākātyāyana refuses him, however, and tells him that he must first deliver the messages as he received them. Koṭikarṇa then visits each of the children of the hungry ghosts whom he was asked to meet and delivers the messages that were given to him. In each case, the recipient of the message doesn't have *śraddhā* [in him] and then is convinced by seeing the gold that Koṭikarṇa explains was hidden by the deceased. Then each in turn comes to have *śraddhā*.

At one level, the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* is simply a karma story: a series of exempla demonstrating that good actions lead to good results and bad actions

lead to bad results. For example, as the first group of five thousand hungry ghosts explains in retrospect about themselves,

We were abusive and scornful,
we were greedy and stingy.
We didn't make even the smallest offerings.
That's why we've come to the ancestral realm.[10]

The second group of thousands of hungry ghosts likewise remarks,

We were intoxicated with the pride of good health,
intoxicated with the pride of wealth and indulgence.
We didn't make even the smallest offerings.
That's why we've come to the ancestral realm.[11]

The former shepherd also offers a similar example. As a human, he explains, he butchered sheep by day; now, as a result, he spends his days as a hungry ghost being devoured by dogs. Likewise, at night he followed the precepts of the Buddhist moral code, so now at night he experiences divine pleasure—in this instance, "fooling around, enjoying himself, and making love with [divine nymphs]."[12] Similarly, the former adulterer, as a result of spending his days following the Buddhist moral code and his nights committing adultery, now spends his days making love with a divine nymph and his nights being devoured by a giant centipede. As for the former brahman woman's husband and son, they are perpetually hungry because as humans they chastised the brahman woman for offering alms to the noble Mahākātyāyana. Since the husband said, "Why doesn't that lousy, shaven-headed ascetic eat dung beetles instead?"[13] and the son said, "Why doesn't that lousy, shaven-headed ascetic eat balls of iron instead?"[14] any food given to them now turns, respectively, into dung beetles and iron balls. The former brahman woman's daughter-in-law and maidservant are also perpetually hungry. The daughter-in-law ate special foods that were destined for the brahman woman's relatives, and the maidservant ate special foods that were sent by those relatives to the brahman woman, and each of them lied about it. Since the daughter-in-law said, "Wouldn't eating the food that was sent to you as a gift be like eating one's own flesh?"[15] and the maidservant said, "Wouldn't eating the food that you sent as a gift be like eating pus and blood?"[16] any food given to them turns, respectively, into flesh and pus-and-blood.[17]

Koṭikarṇa's own experiences in the text also represent a fulfillment of karma. Early in the avadāna, before Koṭikarṇa departs with his caravan for

Ratnadvīpa, he performs auspicious rituals and benedictions to ensure his well-being. Before he can depart, however, his mother expresses her fear that she will never see him again. Koṭikarṇa then speaks harshly to her—he commits the act of harsh speech[18]—reproaching her for acting inauspiciously even though he has performed the requisite rites. "Don't you see the terrible realms of existence that there are?"[19] he angrily exclaims. Koṭikarṇa's mother then urges him to confess his sin of harsh speech. Koṭikarṇa does so and is forgiven. He then performs auspicious rituals and benedictions once again and sets off with his caravan.

Though Koṭikarṇa has been forgiven, the karmic effects of his act still come to roost. Koṭikarṇa thinks that since his mother has spoken inauspiciously, he will somehow be doomed to a terrible existence. He thinks that he will die and be reborn in one of the lower realms of existence: a hell realm, an animal realm, or a realm of hungry ghosts. But this is not the case. Whether or not Koṭikarṇa's mother was aware of these evil existences is not of direct consequence; instead, Koṭikarṇa's act of harsh speech leads him to see exactly what he questioned his mother's ability to see—it leads him to see, as it were, the results of his karma. As the Buddha explains at the end of the avadāna, "He committed the act of harsh speech in the presence of his mother. As a result of that action, he witnessed terrible realms of existence in this lifetime."[20]

That the avadānas in the *Divyāvadāna* are "karma stories" is nothing new; Maurice Winternitz (1993: 266) discussed this some three quarters of a century ago. What has not been discussed, though, are the discursive strategies used in the text to induce characters to believe in the system of karma.[21]

As the character of the Buddha often explains at the end of avadānas in the *Divyāvadāna*,

> And so, monks, the result of absolutely evil actions is absolutely evil, the result of absolutely pure actions is absolutely pure, and the result of mixed actions is mixed. Therefore, monks, because of this, you should reject absolutely evil actions and mixed ones as well, and strive to perform only absolutely pure actions. It is this, monks, that you should learn to do.[22]

The difficulty lies, though, not in informing nonbelievers that all beings are subject to the laws of karma and that something must be done to prevent those individuals who lead or have led unvirtuous lives from future suffering. The difficulty lies in convincing them. Yet, why should someone have confidence in such a system when the results of one's actions are often said to become manifest only after one's death and future rebirth? For such a phenomenon renders

it impossible for ordinary mortals to witness for themselves the truth that everyone gets their just desserts.

Śraddhā Defined

Crucial to this discussion is a proper understanding of the term *śraddhā*. Etymologically it may be explained as "to place" (*dhā*) a "wager" (*śrat*) or "to put" (*dhā*) one's "heart" (*śrat*) on something,[23] but the meaning of the term is still ambiguous in Sanskrit, with a long and complicated history in Indian literature.

In Vedic materials, *śraddhā* primarily means "a belief in the existence and generosity of the gods" or "a belief in the efficacy of ritualistic worship" (Das Gupta 1930: 318, 320).[24] In the Hindu context more generally, it has been explained as an "aspiration of the heart for a transcendent goal . . . a confidence in some appropriate 'means' (*sādhana*) to reach that goal . . . [and] a reliance on the *śāstra* for the knowledge of both . . . the goal and the means (Rao 1974: 178).[25]

In Buddhist literature, the term *śraddhā* (Pali, *saddhā*) is equally multivalent. One standard definition occurs in the *Visuddhimagga*, Buddhaghosa's great compendium from the fourth or fifth century CE:

> It is *saddhā* in that by its means they have *saddhā*, or it itself has *saddhā*, or it is just having *saddhā*. Its characteristic is having *saddhā* or making ready; its function is clearing like the water-clearing gem, or leaping forward like crossing a flood; its manifestation is the absence of impurity, or commitment; its proximate cause is any ground for *saddhā*, or the factors of stream-attainment such as hearing the good dhamma. It should be seen as a hand, property, and seed.[26]

Within Buddhist studies, the term has been similarly polysemous. It has been taken to mean "faith," "belief," "confidence," "trust," and "esteem,"[27] and even among contemporary scholars there is no consensus as to what degree, to use Jayatilleke's (1963: 387) terminology, *śraddhā* is affective, cognitive, or conative.

In his work on early Buddhist theories of knowledge, Jayatilleke (1963: 398) posits *saddhā* as primarily cognitive, as an inferior kind of knowing.[28] In contrast, Rupert Gethin (1992a: 107) quite convincingly argues that *saddhā* in Pali Buddhist literature isn't cognitive, but affective—in other words, that it is "a more straightforward positive response of trust or confidence towards something or somebody" than it is "a belief in propositions or statements of which one does not—or cannot—have knowledge proper (however that be defined)."[29]

To counter Jayatilleke's position, Gethin cites a passage from the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* that contains a conversation between the Buddhist layman Citta and the skeptical Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta.[30] Their conversation contrasts having *saddhā* regarding the existence of a phenomenon and having direct "knowledge" (*ñāṇa*) of that phenomenon. The Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta asks Citta if he has *saddhā* in the ascetic Gotama regarding what he says about the cessation of thought. Citta says no—much to the pleasure of the Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta—but then explains that he doesn't proceed out of *saddhā* in the matter since *he has known it for himself and seen it to be true*.[31]

As Rupert Gethin (1992a: 110) concludes from this passage, there is "a positive feeling of confidence or trust (*saddhā*) that one might have in someone who states that such and such exists [for example, the Buddha], but however justified one's confidence is, a more subtle and refined reason or ground for thinking that something exists, is direct and personal knowing and seeing that something exists." As Gethin suggests, *saddhā* in the Pali materials is frequently represented as being acquired through an oral/aural medium.[32] In the *Divyāvadāna*, however, the logic and medium of *śraddhā* is reversed. Characters *see* things for themselves and then develop "a positive feeling of confidence or trust"—that is, they develop *śraddhā* only *after* having a "direct and personal knowing and seeing that something exists."

The text presents numerous textual pictures that portray this dependence of *śraddhā* on seeing. The resultant narrative world is so dominated by a visual culture that a kind of materialism exists within the text whereby objects of knowledge are construed as tangible, visible properties. Making use of visual language and visual images, the text follows a "seeing is believing" logic in which, in some sense, to know something is to see it—not to hear it—and to teach something is to show it. As a corollary of this, to receive a teaching of the dharma is to see it, and in objects that one can see, one can have more than confidence—one can have belief, one can have knowledge.

Considering that *śraddhā* functions within a visual world in the *Divyāvadāna*, in what follows, I will discuss *śraddhā* and the rhetoric of seeing—how seeing is believing, how seeing is authoritative, how believing is seeing, and how the visual character of the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* contrasts with the oral character of the Pali versions of the story.

Seeing Is Believing

When Koṭikarṇa asks the two groups of hungry ghosts and the individuals who alternately indulge in pleasures and succumb to torments what deed

they had done that led them to be born in such a place, they each counter that "the people of Jambudvīpa are difficult to convince." As a representative doubting mortal of Jambudvīpa, Koṭikarṇa explains that seeing what is before his eyes, why wouldn't he have *śraddhā*? In other words, for him, seeing is believing.

The efficacy of seeing, in turn, is contrasted with the incredulity associated with hearing.[33] The former shepherd, for example, explains that the noble Mahākātyāyana had tried repeatedly to get him to stop butchering sheep but that he wouldn't listen. As he explains,

> The noble Mahākātyāyana, out of compassion for me, came and said, "Friend, the consequence of this deed will be most undesirable. Stop this evil practice that goes against the true dharma!" But I didn't heed his words and stop. Again and again he tried to dissuade me. "Friend," he said, "the consequence of this deed will be most undesirable. Stop this evil practice that goes against the true dharma!" Even then I didn't abstain.[34]

The former shepherd then requests Koṭikarṇa likewise to try to convince his son to stop butchering sheep. How? By first telling him that such an act will have a terrible consequence, and if that doesn't work, by telling him where the former shepherd had buried a pot of gold. When Koṭikarṇa goes to the former shepherd's son and tells him that he has seen his father and that "he says that the consequence of this deed will be most undesirable" and that he should "stop this practice that goes against the true dharma,"[35] he is—as expected—rebuffed. This is the conversation that ensues:

> "Sir, it's now been twelve years since my father died. Has anyone ever been seen coming back from the next world?"
>
> "Friend, I am such a person. I have come back."
>
> He didn't have *śraddhā* [in him].
>
> "Friend, if you don't have *śraddhā* [in me], this is what your father said: 'Underneath the slaughtering pen is a pot filled with gold. Retrieve it and use it to enjoy yourself fully. And from time to time offer alms to the noble Mahākātyāyana and then direct the reward in our names. Maybe then this bad karma will diminish, give out, and finally become exhausted.' "
>
> "I've never heard such a thing before," he reflected. "I'll go and see. If it's the case, all this must be true." He went and dug it up. He found that everything was just as [Koṭikarṇa had said]. And then he had *śraddhā*.[36]

Koṭikarṇa claims that he should be listened to because he has seen the man's father and his father has given him a message, but the man doesn't trust him because, as he claims, no one has ever been seen coming back from the next world. Seeing is the criterion for believability. Then, since the boy doesn't have *śraddhā* [in him], Koṭikarṇa delivers the rest of his father's message regarding the hidden pot of gold and how it should be used. The boy has never heard such a thing before—presumably, that his father had buried a pot of gold and that he should make use of it in this way—so he doubts him. He needs visual proof to be convinced of Koṭikarṇa's message. The boy then digs up the pot of gold and is convinced of the truth of everything Koṭikarṇa has said.

This scenario is repeated with the former brahman adulterer and his adulterous son and with the former brahman woman and her prostitute daughter. In each case, the now hungry ghosts weren't convinced, while they were humans, from listening to Mahākātyāyana's entreaties that they stop their evil actions, nor were their children convinced by Koṭikarṇa's pleas. It is only when they see gold that they have *śraddhā*.

Seers Are Authorities

When Koṭikarṇa tells the shepherd, the adulterer, and the prostitute that he has been to the next world and returned, each of them is incredulous. To see the next world, one generally needs to die, and after death there is no coming back to the same life. But Koṭikarṇa is no ordinary individual.

Like Koṭikarṇa, the monk Mahāmaudgalyāyana is also represented as journeying to the next world and then, upon his return, passing on a message. In the *Sahasodgata-avadāna*, the narrator explains that the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana would journey among the five realms of existence: the realms of hell, animals, hungry ghosts, gods, and mortals[37]—

> and having seen all this, he would come to Jambudvīpa and address the four assemblies [i.e., monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen]. Then whoever had a student or pupil that didn't eagerly follow the religious life would take him and approach the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana . . . and the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana would properly admonish him and properly instruct him. In this way, again and again, those who were properly admonished and properly instructed by the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana would eagerly follow the religious life, and later on they would attain distinction.[38]

The "message" that Mahāmaudgalyāyana passes on to those who need discipline is made clear later in the story. As the Buddha explains, "Ānanda, the monk Mahāmaudgalyāyana or even someone like Mahāmaudgalyāyana can't be everywhere. Therefore, a five-sectioned wheel [of existence] is to be established in the entrance hall of the monastery."[39] Like Koṭikarṇa who warned that evil actions (e.g., butchery, adultery, prostitution) produce evil results (e.g., bad rebirths), the wheel of existence—as Mahāmaudgalyāyana's replacement—offers the same warning. It depicts the five realms of existence and the forces that propel one through this karmic system. In what follows in the story, the boy Sahasodgata goes to the monastery, sees the wheel of existence, realizes that various deeds lead to various destinies, and comes to fear the possibility of rebirth in a terrible existence. He then decides to make offerings to the Buddha and the monastic community to circumvent such a fate.

In both the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* and the *Sahasodgata-avadāna*, those mortals who have seen the next world and—as it is clear in the case of Koṭikarṇa—seen the workings of karma, are the ones who can "properly admonish and properly instruct" others. They are the ones who can teach that one's actions determine one's destiny, and that one should act accordingly to ensure a good future. For both Koṭikarṇa and Mahāmaudgalyāyana, seeing provides authority. Koṭikarṇa, for example, thinks that when he speaks about such matters he should be trusted since he has seen the results of karma "before his eyes."

This trope regarding the authority of seers is also developed in the *Brāhmaṇadārikā-avadāna*. There the Buddha tries to convince an incredulous brahman that he should believe him when he tells of the karmic rewards that one's actions bring: in this case, that his wife will attain awakening as a solitary buddha in exchange for some roasted barley that she gave as alms to the Buddha. The Buddha then asks the brahman if he has ever seen something amazing. In response, the brahman describes a giant banyan tree that five hundred carts could fit under. The Buddha then questions the brahman about how such a tree could be produced by such a small seed: "Who will have *śraddhā* in you that from a seed this size arises such a big tree?"[40] The brahman replies, "Whether honorable Gautama has *śraddhā* in me or not, it was there before my eyes."[41] He then proceeds to explain that there was a good field and a healthy seed, and with the proper rainfall, rich soil, and the right conditions, a great banyan arose. Then the Blessed One utters this verse:

> Just as a field and seed were there before your eyes, brahman,
> likewise karma and its results are right before the eyes of tathāgatas.
> Just as you see, brahman, that a seed is small but a tree is very large,
> I too see, brahman, that a seed is small but the results are great.[42]

Since the Buddha can see the results of karma with his divine eye—they are "right before his eyes" (*pratyakṣa*)—even without going to the next world, as Koṭikarṇa and the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana had done, he can speak with authority. He knows what has happened, what will happen, and why any such happenings occur.[43] Trust can therefore be put in his words. This is made explicit in the *Jyotiṣka-avadāna*. When a brahman boy has doubts about a prediction that the Buddha has made, a *kṣatriya* boy "with deep-seated *śraddhā*"[44] offers this verse:

> The sky with the moon and stars may fall down,
> the earth with its mountains and forests may fly away,
> the water of vast oceans may dry up,
> but great seers will never speak falsely.[45]

Authority is contingent on sight. It empowers one to speak the truth.[46]

Seeing Is Authoritative

While seeing the results of karma gives certain characters in these stories authority, the very act of seeing is also vested with authority. Characters are often represented as coming to believe by seeing a token of a belief system. In the *Sahasodgata-avadāna*, for example, since an effective instructor and disciplinarian such as Mahāmaudgalyāyana can't always be present, a wheel of existence is established as an icon of Mahāmaudgalyāyana's teaching. Seeing this icon is precisely what gets Sahasodgata to have *śraddhā* in the workings of karma and in the importance of doing good deeds—in this case, making offerings to the Buddha and the monastic community.

In the *Brāhmaṇadārikā-avadāna*, the doubting brahman comes to have *śraddhā* in the Buddha because the Buddha, like the seed of a banyan tree, can also produce things that are amazing. Just after the Buddha recites the previously cited verse about a field and seed, he performs the following feat:

> The Blessed One then stuck out his tongue from his mouth so that it covered the entire sphere of his face up to his hairline. Then he said to the brahman, "What do you think, brahman, would a person who can stick out his tongue from his mouth and cover the entire sphere of his face knowingly tell lies, even for the sake of hundreds of thousands of *cakravartin*'s kingdoms?"[47]

The brahman then comes to have *śraddhā* in him.

In the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, the token of the karmic system in which people come to have *śraddhā* is gold. The shepherd, the adulterer, and the prostitute

each come to have *śraddhā* in the truth of Koṭikarṇa's words when they see the buried gold to which Koṭikarṇa directs them. Although there are other possibilities for how the gold got there, the notion is somehow that money doesn't lie. For each of them, the existence of their respective caches of gold seems to mean that Koṭikarṇa really did go to the next world, meet with his or her deceased parent, and bring back a true message.

After Koṭikarṇa delivers the third and final message and the last recipient (the prostitute) comes to have *śraddhā* in Koṭikarṇa's words by seeing the stash of gold, Koṭikarṇa then reflects, "The whole world has *śraddhā* in gold, but no one has *śraddhā* in me."[48] Koṭikarṇa finds this ironic, presumably, for "then he smiled."[49] Why is it, then, that gold should symbolize the truth of Koṭikarṇa's words for the shepherd, adulterer, and prostitute yet produce only a smile for Koṭikarṇa himself? I will return to this question in what follows.

Believing Is Seeing

Just as to see is to believe in these avadānas, often to believe is to see. In the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, after Koṭikarṇa returns from his expedition to Ratnadvīpa, he goes off to a secluded spot with his half-brothers, Dāsaka (Servant) and Pālaka (Protector), to compare their income and expenditures. While his half-brothers go back to check on the loading of cargo, Koṭikarṇa is forgotten, and the caravan sets off without him. When the members of the caravan realize what has happened, they decide not to go back for Koṭikarṇa. "If we go back," they surmise, "every single one of us will straightaway meet with some disaster."[50] They then continue on to Vāsava, where they store their goods. Only then, after repeatedly lying to Koṭikarṇa's parents about their son's fate, do they confess that they left him behind. The narrator then explains that some time after this episode a visitor came to Koṭikarṇa's parents and told them that Koṭikarṇa had returned. They gave him a reward, but when they looked outside for their son, they didn't see him. This happened a second time as well, and when they didn't see Koṭikarṇa this time either, "they began never to have *śraddhā* in anyone again."[51] Shortly thereafter, "crying from grief, they went blind."[52]

Later in the story, after Koṭikarṇa has come back from his sojourn in the next world, he returns to the village of Vāsava. Koṭikarṇa's parents are informed by many people that their son has returned, but "they no longer had *śraddhā* in anyone."[53] Koṭikarṇa eventually arrives at the gateway to their home, and when they hear his voice, they begin to cry. Their tears dissolve the film over their eyes, and for the first time since Koṭikarṇa departed, twelve years previously, they can

see. As his parents remark, "Son, crying with grief over you, we became blind. Now, thanks to you, our sight has been restored."[54]

It seems that once Koṭikarṇa's parents began never to have *śraddhā* in anyone again, they lost their sight. When they are sure that Koṭikarṇa has once again returned, the truth of what others have told them is confirmed. Once again they can have *śraddhā* in what others have to say. Only then can they see.

In support of this reading, I point to a section of the *Saṅgharakṣita-avadāna* that very closely parallels Koṭikarṇa's sojourn among the hungry ghosts and in which the same metaphorical notion of "seeing as believing" occurs. The monk Saṅgharakṣita is also accidentally left behind at the seashore by the caravan with which he is traveling. He too sets off on his own, sees horrific sights, asks the individuals involved what deeds they did to be reborn there, is told that the people of Jambudvīpa are difficult to convince, counters that since he can see what is before his eyes why wouldn't he have *śraddhā*, and is then told of their misdeeds. As Saṅgharakṣita proceeds, he passes through three monasteries, each seemingly normal for half the day and then sites of misery for the other half of the day. In each case, the monks undergo terrible suffering: they begin to break each other's skulls with hammers, douse each other with molten lead, and—in the third instance—all of them are torched and incinerated. As it is explained to Saṅgharakṣita, these are the results of monks performing misdeeds within the confines of a monastery: fighting in the dining hall, wasting food that was given out of *śraddhā* (*śraddhādeya*), and lighting a fire in the monastery.

Eventually, Saṅgharakṣita arrives at a hermitage where five hundred brahman seers reside, but none of them will respond to his request for shelter. The one virtuous seer there explains the situation to him: "Why isn't shelter given to you [followers of the Buddha]? It's because you have a fault. You're great talkers. I'll give you shelter this time if you don't say anything."[55] Saṅgharakṣita agrees, but during the night the deity who lives at that hermitage presses him to teach the dharma. Saṅgharakṣita relents and recites two verses that contain the word "brahman" in the hope that they will appeal to the seers.[56] The brahmans gather together and listen. Meanwhile, the deity living there exercises her magical powers so that the seers can't see each other. Saṇgharakṣita then teaches the sūtra known as the "Simile of the Town" (*nagaropama*).

> While this religious discourse was being recited, all of them clearly grasped the truth and simultaneously achieved the reward of the nonreturner. They also acquired magical powers. Then all of them in one voice exclaimed, "Well said, Bhadanta Saṅgharakṣita!" The deity then released the effects of her magical powers, and they began to see each other.[57]

At first, followers of the Buddha are chastised for talking too much. As I understand this passage, they are being reprimanded for telling stories—making bold claims and speaking without authority. This is much the same criticism that the incredulous brahman in the *Brāhmaṇadārikā-avadāna* leveled against the Buddha. Yet, Saṅgharakṣita has traveled to the next world and back and has seen the fruits of karma before his eyes. He is an authority. When Saṅgharakṣita does teach the seers, he opens their eyes, as it were, to the truth of the Buddhist teaching. In teaching them, he shows them the truth, and when they know the truth, they can see.

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2

Getting and Giving

Do you believe that ahead of you
grief carries the flag of your destiny?
And in the skull do you discover
your ancestry condemned to bone?

—Pablo Neruda, *The Book of Questions*

Śraddhā and *Bhakti:* States of Mind

In trying to determine what *śraddhā* is, it is helpful to determine what it isn't, and the text makes it clear that one thing it isn't is *bhakti*. As a practice, *bhakti* often involves cultivating a love toward a divine being, and as a mental state, it is marked by a feeling of devotion, something akin to faith.[1] Though little is known about the practice of *bhakti* until, perhaps, the sixth century CE, when it appears in the literature of decidedly vernacular and heterodox South Indian movements, the sentiment of *bhakti* can be traced back through a variety of earlier religious and secular texts in Sanskrit.[2] Instead of assessing these materials, however, I will examine how *bhakti* is delineated as a practice and a mental state within the *Divyāvadāna*. These accounts in the *Divyāvadāna* not only offer early evidence for the intellectual and social history of *bhakti*—though from a rival perspective—they also help to mark out a realm of thought and expression against which *śraddhā* can be defined.

At the beginning of the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, it is said that the householder Balasena didn't have a son but desired one. Therefore,

> he prayed to the likes of Śiva, Varuṇa, Kubera, Śakra, and Brahmā, as well as a park deity, a forest deity, a crossroads deity, and a deity who received oblations. He also prayed to his hereditary deity, who shared the same nature as him and who constantly followed behind him. There is a popular saying that as a result of such prayers, sons are born and daughters as well. But this isn't the case. If this were the case, then every man would have a thousand sons, just like a *cakravartin* king. Instead, it's because of the presence of three conditions that sons are born and daughters as well. Which three? The mother and father must come together in love; the mother must be healthy and fertile; and a being seeking rebirth must be standing by. It's because of the presence of these three conditions that sons are born and daughters as well. Nevertheless, the householder Balasena remained devoted to such prayers.[3]

What the narrator seems to be saying is that no results are produced by "praying" (*āyācana*) to gods or goddesses (or however one wants to gloss this act that certain religious practitioners direct toward their presiding deities); instead, certain events, such as a pregnancy, happen when the proper karmic conditions are met. That this futile exercise describes the practice of *bhakti* is made clear in a parallel passage.

In the *Dharmaruci-avadāna*, as a ship full of merchants is about to be devoured by a giant sea monster, the captain of the ship tells those merchants,

> "Death stands before us all. So what should you do now? Each of you should pray to that god in whom you have *bhakti*. Perhaps by these prayers some goddess will free us from this great danger. There is no other means of survival."
>
> Then those merchants, afraid as they were of dying, began to pray to the gods such as Śiva, Varuṇa, Kubera, the great Indra, and Viṣṇu to save their lives. Despite their prayers, nothing particular happened to save them from the deadly danger that they faced.[4]

Denigrated in the text are both the act of praying (*āyācana*), which is represented as being ineffectual, and—apparently—the mental state of *bhakti* that those practitioners possess with regard to Śiva, Varuṇa, Kubera, and so on. In contrast, although there is at least one lay disciple of the Buddha on board, no one prays to the Buddha. The Buddha, apparently, isn't one in whom any of the

merchants has *bhakti*, or if any of them has *bhakti* in the Buddha, none considers him to be a "god" (*deva*).

Following their ineffectual prayers, at the bidding of that lay disciple of the Buddha, the merchants focus their awareness (*smṛti*) on the Buddha and say in one voice, "Praise to the Buddha!"[5] The Buddha, in turn, transforms this outcry so that the sea monster can hear it, and after he does hear it, he slowly retreats.

In a parallel passage in the *Pūrṇa-avadāna* this practice is explicitly cited as "taking refuge." There, a boat full of merchants who are assailed by a fearsome hurricane pray to Śiva, Varuṇa, Kubera, Śakra, and so on, but to no avail. Then, when they find out that one of the merchants on board is the monk Pūrṇa's brother, they say,

> "Gentlemen, the noble Pūrṇa is very powerful because of his merit. Let's take refuge in him alone!" In one voice they all of them released the cry, "Praise to the noble Pūrṇa! Praise! Praise to the noble Pūrṇa!"[6]

Pūrṇa then intercedes and the merchants are saved.[7]

Once again, having *bhakti* in a deity is disparaged as an improper mental state and praying to a deity is belittled as an ineffective practice.[8] In contrast, focusing one's awareness on the Buddha, reciting "Praise to the Buddha," and taking refuge in a powerful Buddhist figure are shown to be effective practices. No mention is made in these passages, however, of the proper mental states that one should cultivate.

Śraddhā and *Bhakti:* Objects of Mind

Other differences between *śraddhā* and *bhakti* concern the objects toward which these mental states are directed, and the kinds of events that are represented as reinforcing or weakening them. With *bhakti*, as Edith Ludowyk-Gyomroi (1947: 48) explains, "devotion is directed not towards a system of thought but towards a person." In the above example from the *Dharmaruci-avadāna*, that person is a deity. In the *Supriya-avadāna,* however, that person is a human being. There the junior caravan leader Supriya takes care of the ailing senior caravan leader Magha, who is on the verge of dying. As the narrator explains, "Supriya attended to Magha, with *bhakti* and respect, like a good son would his father."[9]

In these cases, *bhakti* is a kind of faith in someone as an actor or agent. When characters in the text pray to a god, they are hoping for that god to intervene in mundane affairs (e.g., create a pregnancy, repel a monster, calm a

storm). When a character serves another character with *bhakti*, there is also an expectation of getting, as it were, a return on one's investment. Supriya serves Magha with *bhakti*, a man he had previously never met, because only he can help him to journey to the great trading center Badaradvīpa (Jujube Island) where he can obtain the precious jewels that will allow him to fulfill every person's desire for wealth. As Supriya exclaims when he first hears that Magha is on his deathbed, "Oh no! I hope the great caravan leader Magha doesn't die before I get to see him! Who else will tell me how to go to the great trading center Badaradvīpa!"[10]

With *śraddhā*, however, what is being espoused is a more open-ended kind of confidence—a phenomenon made clearer by a closer look at the text's grammar. The verbal forms of *śraddhā* that occur in the text are rarely accompanied by explicit objects—hence my use of brackets around the subject in such instances—so exactly what characters are having confidence in can be ambiguous. In those few instances when objects for this confidence are supplied, it is "trust or confidence towards something or somebody" (Gethin 1992a: 107). Yet, while this description may be linguistically true, it misses some sense of the relationship between *śraddhā* and its objects, at least in the *Divyāvadāna*.

Gethin suggests as much in his gloss on the previously mentioned passage regarding Citta and the Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta that contrasts *saddhā* with "knowledge" (*ñāṇa*). There, as I mentioned before, Gethin (1992a: 110) refers to "a positive feeling of confidence or trust (*saddhā*) that one might have in someone who states that such and such exists." This is clear throughout his translation of the passage. The verbal forms of *śraddhā* have no direct objects, only indirect objects that are in the genitive (e.g., the *samaṇa* Gotama, the Blessed One, *samaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa*). Gethin (1992a: 109–110) translates each of these instances with the addition of "[when he says]"—"Do you trust the *samaṇa* Gotama [when he says] that . . ." "I do not have trust in the Blessed One [when he says] that . . ." and "who is the *samaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* that I shall [need to] have trust in [when he says] that . . ." Likewise, K. R. Norman (1979: 326) explains that the verbal form of *śraddhā* has two "slightly different meanings: 'to have faith in' and 'to take someone's word for something.' "

In the *Divyāvadāna*, the object of one's *śraddhā* is an individual as a speaker of the truth, and to a greater extent, the truth of that speaker's utterance. The *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* provides numerous such examples where the object of an individual's *śraddhā* seems to be not just another individual, but the message that a particular individual conveys. For example, when Koṭikarṇa delivers messages to the shepherd, the adulterer, and the prostitute, the text explains that each of those individuals "didn't have *śraddhā* [in him]"—in other words, they didn't have *śraddhā* in the message that he was delivering. When each of them then

follows his instructions and finds out that everything was just as Koṭikarṇa had said, each of them then has *śraddhā*—in other words, they each have *śraddhā* in the truth of what Koṭikarṇa had said. Likewise, many people informed Koṭikarṇa's parents that Koṭikarṇa had returned, but "they no longer had *śraddhā* in anyone." In each instance in the above section from the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, I could replace the translations of "he didn't have *śraddhā* [in him]," "you won't have *śraddhā* [in us]," "why wouldn't I have *śraddhā* [in you]," and so on, with "he didn't have *śraddhā* [in what he said]," "you won't have *śraddhā* [in what we say]," "why wouldn't I have *śraddhā* [in what you say]." Perhaps this would even improve on the accuracy of my translation.

One indication that *śraddhā* might not solely be directed toward individual beings—as is the case with *bhakti*—is a warning found in the *Abhidharmakośa* against cultivating *śraddhā* in a teacher.[11] It is, as Nalinaksha Dutt (1940: 642) observes, "akin to *prema* ('affection') and works more as an obstacle than as an aid to spiritual progress." That *śraddhā* directed toward individuals can also be a hindrance is seen in the various stories of Vakkali in Pali literature.[12]

Vakkali is said to be "foremost among those who are actively engaged in *saddhā*,"[13] but this doesn't seem to be a particularly desirable designation. One story line is that once the brahman Vakkali has seen the Buddha, "he can never have enough of seeing the magnificence of his physical body."[14] Consumed as he is with a desire to see the Buddha constantly, he joins the monastic community. Once there, he foregoes the practices of a monk—"he abandons recitation, subjects of meditation, and concentration"—and instead "wanders about contemplating the Teacher."[15] The Buddha chastises him: "Vakkali, what's the use of looking at this foul body of mine?"[16] But this has no effect. Realizing that Vakkali needs something to shock him out of his present condition so that he can spiritually advance, the Buddha rebukes him and sends him away. Vakkali then goes to Vulture Peak, where "because of the strength of his *saddhā*, he can't descend down the path of insight meditation."[17] Distraught at being separated from the Teacher, he contemplates suicide.[18] The Buddha, however, intercedes, and eventually Vakkali attains arhatship.

Examining the terms *bhakti* and *śraddhā* in a wide range of Sanskrit sources, Minoru Hara (1964: 142) comes to similar conclusions:

> Our conclusions, then, are that *śraddhā* expresses a state of mind activity directed toward impersonal objects, that this holds true even when the verb *śrad-dhā-* takes an object which is grammatically personal; that the nature of *śraddhā* is more intellectual than emotional; and that this state of mind or activity originates in a ritual context,

> namely that of Vedic Brahmanism orthodoxy. And these semantic aspects of *śraddhā* stand in striking contrast to *bhakti*: impersonal and personal, intellectual and emotional, and Vedic-Brahmanic and Hinduistic.

Leaving aside certain doctrinal implications of Hara's conclusions, the term *śraddhā* in the *Divyāvadāna* seems to accord well with what Hara writes, particularly the notion that even when *śraddhā* has an individual as a direct object, what this really indicates is "a state of mind activity directed toward impersonal objects."

Having argued above that in the *Divyāvadāna* to have *śraddhā* in someone also means to have *śraddhā* in what he or she says, the question then arises as to what are the "impersonal objects" that such a person speaks of and, hence, that are to be the objects of *śraddhā*. I contend that there are two such objects: first, the system of karma, and second, the efficacy of offering the rewards from almsgiving to one's deceased parents—more literally, "assigning the reward" (*dakṣiṇā* + *ā* √*diś*). In what follows, once again referencing the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, I will examine what, precisely, these objects are in which characters come to have *śraddhā*. While the karmic system requires a minimum of additional exegesis to clarify, "assigning the reward" is more elusive and needs greater explanation. To try and make sense of the process and mechanics of the latter, I will examine two specific instances in which "assigning the reward" is prescribed, and another instance in which inscribed offerings are made for the benefit of a lost child.

Objects of *Śraddhā*: Karma and *Dakṣiṇā*

The only time in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* that the reader is alerted that a character is being made to have *śraddhā* in something is when another character responds that "the people of Jambudvīpa are difficult to convince." This expression occurs in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* eight times, each time in exactly the same context. When Koṭikarṇa travels to the next world, each time he meets a hungry ghost he asks what deed he, she, or they did to be reborn there. Each time, the response is the same: "Śroṇa, the people of Jambudvīpa are difficult to convince. You won't have *śraddhā* [in me/us]." And then Koṭikarṇa counters that he has *śraddhā* in what's before his eyes. This happens five times: twice with a group of hungry ghosts and then three times with hungry ghosts who are on flying mansions. In each of those last three encounters, Koṭikarṇa is instructed to go and tell that hungry ghost's erring son or daughter that he has

seen his or her deceased father or mother, and so forth, and then to say "that the consequence of this deed will be most undesirable. Stop this evil practice that goes against the true dharma!" In each case, Koṭikarṇa responds, as he has been instructed to say, that "The people of Jambudvīpa are difficult to convince. He [or 'she'] won't have *śraddhā* in me." The belief in question in each of these examples is the belief in the system of karma.

The other "impersonal object" in which characters come to have *śraddhā* is the efficacy of "assigning the reward" (*dakṣiṇā* + *ā* √*diś*). Such a connection between *śraddhā* and *dakṣiṇā* is also found in Vedic literature. As Hermann Oldenberg (1896: 448–450) explains, *śraddhā* designates the mental state of one who believes in the efficacy of Vedic sacrifices and, as such, is liberal in offering a "sacrificial fee" (*dakṣiṇā*) to the officiating priests.[19]

In the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, this practice of "assigning the reward" is mentioned six times: three times in the nearly identical messages that Koṭikarṇa is asked to deliver and three more times in those respective messages to the shepherd, the adulterer, and the prostitute. In the case of the former shepherd *cum* hungry ghost, for example, he first tells Koṭikarṇa that he should tell his son to stop his evil ways or else he will experience an evil result—in other words, that karma really is binding just as Mahākātyāyana had told him. Koṭikarṇa then replies that his son, as a mortal of Jambudvīpa, probably won't have *śraddhā* [in him]. In response, Koṭikarṇa is told that if his son doesn't have *śraddhā* [in him], he should be told to dig up the pot of gold that his father buried and then do two things. First, "Enjoy yourself fully."[20] Second,

> And from time to time offer alms to the noble Mahākātyāyana and then direct the reward in our names. Maybe then this bad karma will diminish, give out, and finally be exhausted.[21]

It is all this, apparently, that the shepherd, the adulterer, and the prostitute come to have *śraddhā* in when each of them follows Koṭikarṇa's instructions and finds out that everything was just as he had said.

This second prescription presents us with an instance of "assigning the reward." At one level, this practice is fairly clear. It is "a ritualized recitation of a verse or verses which formally designated the beneficiaries of the merit produced from a specific donation or gift" (Schopen 1994a: 545).[22] Yet not all the intricacies of this practice are known.

A good starting place for making sense of this second prescription, within the very localized context of this story, is another "assigning the reward" passage that occurs very early in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*. There Balasena has just found out that his wife is pregnant with a boy, and in his joy, he puts his desires to words in this inspired utterance:

May my son not be ignoble.
May he perform those duties I expect of him.
May he, having been supported by me, support me in return.
May he be the one to claim my inheritance.
May my family lineage be long lasting.[23]

The last of these inspired utterances reads as follows:

> And may he, when we are dead and gone, make offerings, either few or many, as well as perform meritorious deeds, and then direct the reward [in our names] with these words—"This shall follow these two wherever they are born and wherever they go."[24]

Here Balasena hopes that after he and his wife have passed away,[25] his son will make some offerings and then direct the reward from those offerings in their names. Notice that the proposed recipients of the offerings (i.e., Balasena and his wife) aren't specified as Buddhist, nor is there any indication that they are. All that is known of Balasena's beliefs and practices is that he has *bhakti* in a variety of gods and that he prays to them. As I have shown previously, these are not considered to be properly Buddhist within the *Divyāvadāna*.

In their own prescriptions for the assigning of rewards from offerings, however, the former shepherd, the former adulterer, and the former brahman woman each tell Koṭikarṇa to tell his son (or her daughter) to make offerings to the noble Mahākātyāyana. Presumably, as inhabitants of the next world, they are authorities as to which offerings provide them with the most benefit. Interestingly, though, there is no prescription for making such offerings to any other Buddhist monk.

There are also two other interpretive problems regarding this inspired utterance that need to be addressed: since the referent for the neuter indexical "this" (*idam*) isn't specified, what is the "this" that "shall follow these two wherever they are born and wherever they go"? And what assistance will the "this" offer? In an effort to address these problems and at the same time elucidate the mechanics of the practice of "assigning the reward," I'll return once again to the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*.

To resume—After Koṭikarṇa's parents are twice duped into giving rewards to individuals who claim that Koṭikarṇa has returned home, they begin never to have *śraddhā* in anyone again, but they also do something to ensure their son's well-being:

> In parks and in their community halls and temples,[26] they presented and established umbrellas, fans, water pots, and shoes that were

> inscribed with these letters: "If Śroṇa Koṭikarṇa is still alive, [this is] for his speedy return, for his quick return. Otherwise, if he has died and passed away, [this is so] that the life that he has been born into shall be followed by another, even better existence."[27]

While this practice may or may not be the same as assigning the reward of an offering in someone's name—that which Balasena hoped his son Koṭikarṇa would some day perform for him and what those hungry ghosts hoped their children would one day perform for them—my sense is that this practice shares enough similarities with these other instances of "assigning the reward" to be instructive and also help clarify the elusive "this" in the inspired utterance mentioned above.

Notice that the inscribed offerings made by Koṭikarṇa's parents are said to be efficacious in two separate instances: whether Koṭikarṇa is dead or whether he is alive. In the case of Koṭikarṇa's death, these offerings are to function in a similar way to the rewards-from-offerings that Koṭikarṇa's parents hope will one day be assigned to them. They are to help lead one to and through a better rebirth. In the case that Koṭikarṇa is still living—a case unlike the one mentioned by the hungry ghosts—these are to help speed along his return. But again, how is this to be done?

After Koṭikarṇa enters the first iron city and meets the first group of hungry ghosts who tell him that they have been reborn there because they had been abusive in a previous life and hadn't given alms, these hungry ghosts tell Koṭikarṇa this: "Go, Śroṇa! You're very powerful because of [your] merit. Have you ever seen anyone who entered a city of hungry ghosts leaving it safe and sound?"[28] When Koṭikarṇa does leave the city, he meets the city's gatekeeper. Previously, when Koṭikarṇa was entering the gates to the city, he had asked that gatekeeper if there were any water in the city. The gatekeeper had answered his questions with silence, which Koṭikarṇa apparently understood to signify his assent.[29] Now Koṭikarṇa says to him,

> "Hey friend! It would have been good if you'd have informed me that this is a city of hungry ghosts. Then I wouldn't have entered it."
>
> "Go, Śroṇa!" the gatekeeper said to him. "You're very powerful because of [your] merit. That's how you entered a city of hungry ghosts and left it safe and sound."[30]

Koṭikarṇa then continues on his way, and once again, in another iron city, the same events take place and the same conversations ensue. In the end, two separate crowds of hungry ghosts and two separate gatekeepers tell Koṭikarṇa that the reason he, unlike ordinary mortals, can come and go from these

cities of hungry ghosts is that he is "very powerful because of [his] merit" (*puṇya-maheśākhya*).[31]

This expression is crucial for understanding the utility that offerings can have for others in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, but it is surprisingly tricky to interpret.[32] Regardless of how the etymology of this expression is construed, however, the sense of the term *maheśākhya* that seems best to fit its usage in the *Divyāvadāna* is "very powerful."[33]

Setting aside the expression *maheśākhya*, the term *puṇya* in *puṇya-maheśākhya* is still problematic. Franklin Edgerton, in his *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary*, proposes that this "merit" (*puṇya*) was "acquired by past deeds"—in other words, that meritorious deeds were performed in the past and hence merit was accrued. But who performed these deeds in the case of Koṭikarṇa? Later in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* the monks who are listening to the Buddha tell the story of Koṭikarṇa ask him what deed Koṭikarṇa did that resulted in these events that ensued. The Buddha makes no mention, though, of Koṭikarṇa having performed a meritorious deed such that he gained sufficient power to enter and leave a city of hungry ghosts. Regarding Koṭikarṇa's meritorious deeds, the Buddha explains only that since in a former life Koṭikarṇa "made offerings to the stūpa of the perfectly awakened Kāśyapa and then made a fervent aspiration, as a result of that action, he was born in a family that was rich, wealthy, and prosperous."[34]

Koṭikarṇa, it seems, is very powerful not because of the merit accrued from his own meritorious actions, but because of the merit that his parents accrued, when they presented and established inscribed offerings in parks, community halls, and temples, and which they then directed toward him. The merit, in other words, is his, but the meritorious deeds were theirs. Approaching this from another narrative perspective, if it is to be assumed these inscribed offerings made by Koṭikarṇa's parents had some effect—and the text gives no indication to the contrary[35]—and since this is the only effect of such a kind mentioned and since this effect does explain how Koṭikarṇa could navigate through the next world and then safely return, this interpretation seems quite plausible.

Now to return to the question of what the "this" is in Balasena's inspired utterance mentioned above and what assistance the "this" will offer Balasena and his wife. It seems that the implied subject of "this" is "this merit," and it is this merit that once directed to others will make those individuals more "powerful" (*maheśākhya*). As a result of this power, recipients such as Koṭikarṇa are better able to deal with whatever situations they have to face as a consequence of their karma, or as Balasena and the hungry ghosts aspire, such recipients are destined for a favorable rebirth and a fortunate existence.[36]

Two passages from the *Bhaiśajyavastu* and the *Saṅghabhedavastu* of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* provide additional support for at least the first of these two claims.[37] In the *Bhaiśajyavastu*, the brahmans and householders of Nagarabindu serve a meal to the Buddha and then, after seeing five hundred hungry ghosts approaching, begin to flee. The Buddha explains that those hungry ghosts are their deceased relatives and offers to assign the reward from their offering in the names of those hungry ghosts. With their consent, "the Blessed One, with a voice having five qualities, then commenced to assign the reward in their names:

> May the merit from this very gift follow these hungry ghosts!
> May they quickly rise up and out of the dreadful realm of hungry ghosts!"[38]

Likewise in the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, King Suddhodana is described as feeding the Blessed One, along with the monastic community, and then presenting him with Nyagrodha Park. Thereupon, "the Blessed One, with a voice possessing five qualities, assigned the reward:

> May the merit from this very gift follow the *Śā*kyas!
> May they always attain the station desired or wished for!"[39]

In both these instances what will "follow" the designated recipients of these rewards—like the "this" that will "follow" Balasena and his wife "wherever they are born and wherever they go"—is specified as "merit." It seems quite reasonable that "the merit" (*yat puṇyam*) and the "this" (*idam*) mentioned in the previous prescription share the same referent.

It is also worth noticing that in the example from the *Bhaiśajyavastu* the intended recipients are deceased ancestors, while in the example from the *Saṅghabhedavastu* the intended recipients are the members of a lineage, presumably both past and present. Though the two explicit "assigning the reward" examples in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* cite only deceased ancestors as their beneficiaries, the inscribed offerings that Balasena and his wife make on their son Koṭikarṇa's behalf are not peculiar in their intention of benefiting a recipient whether he "is still alive" or whether "he has died and passed away." Nevertheless, it seems that these particular offerings were intended primarily for the deceased, for when Koṭikarṇa is finally returned to his family's park in the village of Vāsava, the first thing he sees are these inscribed offerings, and the first thing he thinks is, "If my parents have accepted that I'm dead, why should I go home again?"[40]

Following the logic of the story, one can intercede directly on behalf of the inhabitants of this world of humans and animals, but once beings have died and passed away from this world of humans and become hungry ghosts (or residents of the ancestral realm), one can ease their difficulties only by making such offerings as the text prescribes.

For example, after Koṭikarṇa has been left behind by his caravan, he proceeds on his own by donkey. That night, however, a dusty wind blows that covers over the path that he is following. From then on, the donkeys can only plod along, alternately sniffing and trudging. Frustrated at their slow pace, Koṭikarṇa begins to beat them. "Suffering from thirst, with pained looks on their faces and their tongues hanging out, they continued on."[41] Seeing them like this,

> Koṭikarṇa felt compassion. He reflected, "If I don't set them free, I'll straightaway meet with some disaster. Who has such a cruel heart and so little concern for the next world that he'd whip the bodies of these donkeys with a goad?" He set them free. "From now on," he said, "may you eat grass whose fresh upper part hasn't already been eaten and that hasn't already been trampled! May you drink water that isn't dirty! And may cool winds blow on you from all four directions!"[42]

Here Koṭikarṇa first ponders the immutability of karma—if he mistreats those animals he will suffer the result of that deed and he will "meet with some disaster." Moved by his compassion, he sets them free, for in this world one can help others directly.

Yet compassion and direct action don't serve Koṭikarṇa in the next world. When, soon thereafter, he enters two different iron cities and meets thousands of hungry ghosts who beg him for water, he can't help them. "Friends," he says, "I'm looking for water as well. Where is there water that I can give you?"[43] Then later, when Koṭikarṇa meets the former brahman woman on a flying mansion along with her husband, son, daughter-in-law, and maidservant who are now hungry ghosts bound to the four corner-posts of her bed, those four hungry ghosts plead, "Śroṇa, you're compassionate. We're hungry. Give us some food!"[44] Though the woman had told Koṭikarṇa not to intercede—"Śroṇa, if these hungry ghosts ask you for anything, don't give it to them!"[45]—Koṭikarṇa offers them food that turns into dung beetles, iron balls, flesh, and pus and blood, respectively, as a result of their karma. Owing to the terrible smell of all this "food," the woman returns and says, "Śroṇa, you were forbidden by me! Why did you give them food? What can I say of my compassion? Your compassion is greater."[46] Though Koṭikarṇa is compassionate, and compassion can lead one to perform good deeds and reap the results thereof, he can't feed hungry ghosts directly and satisfy them.

As the story instructs us, to feed a hungry ghost one must make offerings in the human realm and then direct the reward of these offerings to that particular individual. In other words, once a relative has died, if that person has been reborn as a hungry ghost—and there is no way of knowing besides, perhaps, asking a buddha—the only way to help alleviate that individual's sufferings is to follow the text's prescription. As the hungry ghosts themselves later explain, to assist them one should offer food to the noble Mahākātyāyana and then direct the reward accrued from such offerings in their names.[47] This is the way, however indirectly, that they can be helped.

As the hungry ghosts also explain, this practice is to be performed by the deceased's children. None of the hungry ghosts ask Koṭikarṇa himself to perform it on their behalf; he is only asked to convey such a request to their children. Likewise, Balasena hopes that his son Koṭikarṇa will one day perform meritorious deeds and assign the reward on his behalf.

Though Balasena is Koṭikarṇa's father and not his son, the extenuating circumstances of the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* lead to a reversal of fortunes such that Balasena, in making inscribed offerings for the benefit of Koṭikarṇa, seems to be performing a similar though not specified practice of "assigning the reward." Other aspects of these inscribed offerings are also a bit unusual. For example, though they do seem to convey merit to their designated recipient, there is no "ritualized recitation of a verse or verses," but rather an inscription of them. There is also no intercessor—such as the noble Mahākātyāyana—to assign the merit that is generated from the offering to its intended recipient. Further, there is no mention of any Buddhists in this practice, either as donors or recipients. It is merely said that these offerings were presented and established in parks, community halls, and temples. Moreover, while in other instances food is offered—since "hungry ghosts" (*preta*),[48] as this common rendering of their name indicates, are always hungry—here umbrellas, fans, water pots, and shoes are offered, perhaps as requisites for a journey. All this raises the question of whether, if it is the case with this practice that such offerings convey merit to a recipient so that he becomes more powerful, it is also the case in the instances where "assigning the reward" practice is clearly specified.

Now to return once again to the second prescription made by each of the hungry ghosts (i.e., to offer alms to the noble Mahākātyāyana from time to time and then direct the reward in the name[s] of one's dead ancestors). Regardless of the mechanics involved in this "assigning the reward" practice, this prescription still contains other problems that need to be considered. For example, to whom should the rewards of these meritorious deeds be directed? In each occurrence of this prescription, a hungry ghost tells Koṭikarṇa to instruct one of his or her descendants to make offerings "and then direct the reward in our

names."[49] But is the object one's mother and father, three generations of ancestors,[50] or one's tribe?[51]

In Balasena's inspired utterance concerning the offerings that Koṭikarṇa will one day make on his behalf, the object to which the reward should be directed also isn't specified, only the result that "this shall follow these two wherever they are born and wherever they go."[52] This makes it clear that the object is Balasena and his wife. In the parallel passage in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* (GM iii 4, 160.17–161.1), the object to which the reward should be directed is mentioned, and once again it occurs in the genitive plural—"in our names" (*asmākaṃ namnā*)—not in the dual as might be expected. One possible explanation is that this expression became fixed regardless of the number of the object.

Likewise puzzling is the observation that follows this second prescription that "maybe then this bad karma will diminish, give out, and finally be exhausted."[53] Presumably, the karma in question is that of the deceased relative/hungry ghost in question, but it could refer, in addition, to the karma of the intended performers of this practice of "assigning the reward." Perhaps by following this prescription, for example, the shepherd and the others can help to alleviate their deceased parent's suffering as well as their own.

The assigning of merit from such meritorious deeds, however, doesn't guarantee any results. The text is circumspect: "maybe," or "perhaps," or "may it be that" (*apy evaitat*) this will be the case. This circumspect attitude regarding the efficacy of this practice is striking considering that Balasena as well as the hungry ghosts who petition Koṭikarṇa mention no other means to preserve themselves in the next world. It is also striking since in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* the desire of donors to secure for themselves a permanent source of ongoing merit that will preserve them in this world and the next—through this very practice of "assigning the reward"—is represented as leading to a variety of regulations and practices regarding the building and maintenance of monasteries (Schopen 1994: 544–547).[54] If the practice of "assigning the reward" is such an important means of conveying merit, and if this practice accords with karmic laws that hold true for all mortals, why is its efficacy in question?

The importance of probing the intricacies of "assigning the reward" becomes clearer when confronted with the apparent irony that both the system of karma and the process of *dakṣiṇā* present: in a world in which *śraddhā* is predicated on seeing, these objects, the ones in which characters come to have *śraddhā*, for the ordinary mortal are completely invisible. To phrase it another way, how is it that characters should only have *śraddhā* in what they can see and yet come to have *śraddhā* in two things that they *can't* see? Is all this that

different from the boy Śvetaketu in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* who is told to have *śraddhā* in "this subtle essence that you don't perceive"?

The Paradigm of the Believer

What then is *śraddhā,* and what does an individual who has it do? As I mentioned before, unlike *bhakti* which is represented as a faith in unseen forces that can intervene in human affairs, *śraddhā* is represented as a mental state that individuals have with regard to others and with regard to certain "indirect objects" whose truth those others profess. For an individual to have *śraddhā*, it is necessary that the individual have a visual confirmation of the truth of certain indirect objects (e.g., the system of karma, the process of *dakṣiṇā*) or be convinced of the truth of these objects by individuals who likewise claim to have experienced such a visual confirmation. Hence, characters never have *śraddhā* in entirely unseen objects, though they may have *śraddhā* in objects that they themselves have not seen by dint of having *śraddhā* in others who have seen them. For this entire process to work, an individual must hear the dharma regarding such objects—that is, a true description of how they function—from an eyewitness who speaks truthfully (e.g., the Buddha, Maudgalyāyana, Koṭikarṇa).[55] As I already quoted the text as saying, "great seers will never speak falsely."

This process is not without its problems. First, as in the case of the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, the requisite objects to be seen require one to journey to the next world. Yet, as more than one character in the text notes incredulously, "Has anyone ever been seen coming back from the next world?" Second, these objects—in this case, the system of karma and process of *dakṣiṇā*—can't be seen directly. They are indirect objects, proceedings in motion. A character can only see individual actions or the individual effects of those actions, such as a man being mauled by dogs or consumed by a giant centipede. The causal connections that define these systems aren't visible to an ordinary mortal; they are processes whose truth can't be confirmed through mundane vision. Third, even these individual events don't speak for themselves. Whether Koṭikarṇa sees a city of hungry ghosts or the hungry ghosts inside, he still needs to have what he sees explained. In other words, even when he gains visual confirmation of an object—let alone an indirect object—he is still dependent on others to explain to him what it is that he sees.

For example, during his travels, when Koṭikarṇa is face to face with a lofty iron city full of hungry ghosts, he mistakes it for something else—not once,

but twice. Both times, as Koṭikarṇa is about to enter such a city, he meets "a man standing there at the gate who is black, cruel, and fierce, with red eyes and a massive body, who brandishes an iron staff in his hands."[56] Koṭikarṇa then asks each of these gatekeepers if there is water inside the city, and each of them answers his question with silence. When Koṭikarṇa is leaving each of these cities, he chastises them: "Hey friend!" he says on both occasions. "It would have been good if you'd have informed me that this is a city of hungry ghosts. Then I wouldn't have entered it." Regardless of whether such hungry ghosts would speak the truth—for the text only claims that "great seers never speak falsely"—Koṭikarṇa is still dependent on them to explain even what he sees before his eyes.

Much the same can be said of Koṭikarṇa's engagement with the operations of karma and *dakṣiṇā*. For example, when Koṭikarṇa meets hungry ghosts like the former shepherd or the former adulterer, he can see their situations before him. Yet it is only in response to his question—"What deed led you to be reborn here?"—that he learns what it is that he sees and the causal links of karma that are at work there.

To explain it in another fashion, visual confirmation is a necessary condition for establishing the truth of an object (whether the identity of a city or the connections that constitute a karmic chain), but such confirmation is singularly difficult for the ordinary mortal to gain, and it isn't a sufficient condition. If an individual does gain such visual confirmation of an object, he is still dependent on someone else to explain to him what that object is. An individual needs to see it for himself *and* have someone explain it. Seeing alone does not produce confidence and trust; one is still dependent on the words of another.

This is illustrated most vividly in the *Sahasodgata-avadāna*. Since Mahāmaudgalyāyana can't always be present to instruct and discipline monastics and laypeople, the Buddha has a group of monks draw a wheel of existence in the entrance hall of their monastery. But images don't always speak for themselves.

> Brahmans and householders would come and ask, "Noble ones, what is this that's drawn here?"
>
> "Friends," they would say, "we don't know either."
>
> Then the Blessed One said, "A monk is to be appointed in the entrance hall who can show/prove [the wheel of existence] to those brahmans and householders who keep on coming."
>
> The Blessed One had said that a monk is to be appointed, so without making any distinction they appointed monks though they

> were childish or foolish, immature or even unvirtuous. They themselves didn't understand [the wheel of existence], how then could they show/prove it to the brahmans and householders who would come? So the Blessed One said, "A competent monk is to be appointed."[57]

Like Koṭikarṇa, who saw two cities of hungry ghosts but didn't grasp what they were, the brahmans and householders see the wheel of existence but don't understand it. For them to grasp the significance of the wheel of existence, a competent monk must be there who can *darśayati* it to them—that is, most literally, "cause them to see it." Their understanding of the object is contingent upon this act. They need someone who—and here the secondary meanings of *darśayati* come to bear—"proves it to them," "demonstrates it to them," "explains it to them." In the same way that the brahmans and householders can't grasp the object without it being shown/proved to them, the person who performs this act of showing/proving can't do so without understanding it. Epistemology and visuality are intertwined: showing/proving necessitates understanding, and understanding necessitates seeing.

By the use of the verb *darśayati*, the text elides the notion that the wheel of existence needs to be explained with words, but the interaction that is recounted between the brahmans, householders, and monks belies this notion. The brahmans and householders see the wheel of existence, ask the monks what it is, and expect a response—a response in words. Since they are already looking at the wheel of existence, they expect that it will be explained to them, not shown to them once again. Yet the text is elusive. The visual subsumes the oral/aural, but the absorption is not complete.

Considering that *śraddhā* in the *Divyāvadāna* is represented as being dependent on both a verbal and a visual interaction, it may be useful to think of this mental state as neither cognitive, following Jayatilleke, nor affective, following Gethin, but as the product of an aesthetic engagement.[58] As Nelson Goodman (1976: 247–248) remarks about engaging with art,

> Most of the troubles that have been plaguing us can, I have suggested, be blamed on the domineering dichotomy between the cognitive and the emotive. On the one side we put sensation, perception, inference, conjecture, all nerveless inspection and investigation, fact and truth; on the other, pleasure, pain, interest, satisfaction, disappointment, all brainless response, liking and loathing. This pretty effectively keeps us from seeing that in aesthetic experience *the emotions function cognitively*. The work of art is apprehended through the feelings as well as through the senses.

It may be that unlike a Kantian aesthetics of "disinterested interest,"[59] *śraddhā* in the *Divyāvadāna* is an embodied aesthetic experience, a multisensory embrace of images, or at least a trust in one who has had such an experience. In other words, *śraddhā* may not be simply a linguistic response to objects, but rather something more complex, perhaps akin to states produced by the practices of *buddhānusmṛti* ("bringing to mind the Buddha") or *kasina* meditation.

These epistemological conditions and conceits in the *Divyāvadāna* help constitute a framework for practice that encourages the practitioner to be self-reliant and bear witness to the karmic truths of the phenomenal world, but that framework also constrains him to be dependent on the words of others. With this in mind, consider the oft-quoted *Kesaputta-sutta* of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*.[60]

In the *Kesaputta-sutta*, the Kālāmas of Kesaputta ask the Buddha how to evaluate the truthfulness of what ascetics and brahmans tell them, for when they listen, they have doubts and uncertainty. "Who of these honorable ascetics speaks truthfully and who falsely?"[61] As the Buddha explains,

> Now look here, Kālāmas. Don't be led by report, tradition, or hearsay. Don't be led by canonical authority, by logic or inference, or by reasoned consideration, nor by the results of indulging in speculation, by good appearances, or by the thought that some ascetic is your teacher. Kālāmas, when you know for yourselves that these dhammas are unwholesome; these dhammas are faulty; these dhammas are condemned by the wise; and these dhammas, when performed and undertaken, lead on to loss and suffering—then, Kālāmas, you should reject them.[62]

While the self-reliance that the Buddha preaches here may sit well with the Buddhism of the Pali canon and the "Protestant" Buddhism that has emerged since the nineteenth century, it offers little practical advice for characters in the *Divyāvadāna*. The truth of the phenomena toward which *śraddhā* is directed, such as the system of karma and the process of *dakṣiṇā*, may be important for maintaining the laity's conviction in the efficacy of their offerings, but such truth is difficult for anyone, whether Kālāmas or not, to "know for oneself." Granted that *śraddhā* is not "knowledge," but in the realm of practice, regardless of the visual rhetoric of the text, how is *śraddhā* anything more than confidence in the words of another?

This configuration and rhetoric of *śraddhā* raises numerous questions, yet many of these questions are complicated by the fact—which I mentioned in chapter 1—that more than two-thirds of the stories in the *Divyāvadāna* also occur in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*. Considering that the *Divyāvadāna* is

generally thought to have been intended for the laity and the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* the exclusive preserve of monastics, the occurrence of the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* in nearly identical form in both texts makes questions of audience doubly difficult.

One can imagine that non-Buddhists might have been attracted to the character of Koṭikarṇa, for Koṭikarṇa isn't said to be a Buddhist or shown to engage in any Buddhist practices until after his journey to the next world. In fact, the truths in which Koṭikarṇa comes to have *śraddhā*—that is, the system of karma and the process of *dakṣiṇā*—aren't represented as being particularly Buddhist either, only aspects of the world "as it really is" (*yathābhūta*).[63] The warrant for their truthfulness isn't that the Buddha has taught them, even if he is an eyewitness to this effect, but that, like the Buddhist layman Citta in the previously cited example, he has known them for himself and seen them to be true. Even Koṭikarṇa's decision to go forth as a monk isn't motivated by his desire to follow the religious life; rather, it is because he assumes that his parents think that he is dead. As he reflects, "If my parents have accepted that I'm dead, why should I go home again? Instead, I'll go away. I'll go forth as a monk under the noble Mahākātyāyana."[64]

And what about monastics? In the stories of the *Divyāvadāna*, monastics are never represented as having *śraddhā;* only the laity are said to possess it. Yet, if monastics weren't supposed to have *śraddhā* in Buddhist teachers or doctrines, what purpose did this discourse on *śraddhā* serve in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya?* And what constituted their initial engagement with these phenomena? Was such an engagement also dependent on the visual? Clearly the questions that the text raises exceed the answers that it gives.

The Gold Standard of the Karmic System

Previously I concluded that the object of one's *śraddhā* was an individual as a speaker of the truth, and to a greater extent, the truth of that speaker's utterance. So what, then, is the significance of Koṭikarṇa's remark in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* that "the whole world has *śraddhā* in gold, but no one has *śraddhā* in me?"[65] What does it mean to have *śraddhā* in gold, as opposed to having *śraddhā* in the Buddha, Maudgalyāyana, or Koṭikarṇa? And what is the truth for which gold stands?

At one level in the *Divyāvadāna*, gold stands for the karmic truth that good actions produce good results, and often those results amount to possessing material wealth. There is, as it were, a gold standard for judging one's karmic worth whereby the amount of wealth one possesses indicates the character of

one's former deeds and the extent of one's karmic stock. What is being said is that "money talks," and the story money tells is of an individual's karmic legacy.

The material rewards of good actions—which, at least in the *Divyāvadāna*, can generally be construed as acts of giving (*dāna*)—are most clearly enumerated in the *Dānādhikaraṇa-mahāyānasūtra* ("The Mahāyāna Sūtra on the Topic of Giving").[66] The text lists thirty-seven gifts that a wise man should give and the results that will accrue from each gift. Yet, only some of those results are spiritual, like obtaining "the flowers of the factors of awakening" (*bodhyaṅgapuṣpa*)[67] or becoming fully purified from attachment, hate, and delusion. Many of the gifts simply result in material benefits; giving wealth to get more wealth. For example,

> [12.] He gives a gift of clothing, which results in his enjoying excellent clothing. [13.] He gives a gift of shelter, which results in his having distinguished mansions, upper apartments, palaces, residences, multi-story buildings, gardens, and parks. [14.] He gives a gift of a bed, which results in his enjoying himself in an upper-class family.[68]

The possession of wealth, however, is more than just a fortuitous byproduct of ritual acts of giving. As the text makes clear, it is also primary among the reasons that such deeds are performed in the first place. In a number of instances, characters make offerings and then use the merit accrued from such offerings to gain—if not purchase—future wealth. For example, in the Buddha's account of what Koṭikarṇa did in the past that resulted in what transpired in the present, he narrates how in a previous life Koṭikarṇa—then a caravan leader from the North Country—donated a jeweled earring as well as additional funds to help repair a broken-down stūpa. After making these contributions, he performed a great *pūjā* and then made this fervent aspiration: "By this root of virtue may I be born in a family that is rich, wealthy, and prosperous; and may I obtain such virtues so that I may please and not displease just such a teacher as this one!"[69] As a result of his fervent aspiration, the Buddha explains, this is precisely what occurred.

This episode reaffirms the idea that I mentioned in the introduction that merit can be used as a currency for an advance purchase on future wealth.[70] One can cash in the virtue that one has stockpiled by using a root of virtue as the mechanism of exchange. This allows one to capitalize on the virtue that one has, utilizing this moral capital to assure that one's fervent aspiration comes true and to convert one's present-day merit into future prosperity. In many ways, merit and gold are convertible forms of currency. One can gain merit through acts of giving, and through the acquisition of merit one can

gain money or gold, whether as a byproduct of one's virtuousity or as a direct requested result.

In addition to being both a natural and desired result of performing good deeds, the possession of wealth also indicates an advanced position along the path toward spiritual awakening. Throughout the avadānas in the *Divyāvadāna*, characters who are destined for spiritual distinction in their own lifetimes are either born into wealth as laymen (e.g., Koṭikarṇa, Jyotiṣka) or royalty (e.g., Aśoka, Kanakavarṇa), or else they accrue it on their own (e.g., Pūrṇa, Supriya). It is as though the good karma that results in characters becoming wealthy somehow also leads those characters to spiritual achievement. This presents the outside observer with an apparent truism that the acquisition of wealth is a last step toward spiritual achievement or, more dubiously, that the acquisition of wealth itself somehow leads to this goal. Though the latter represents a false etiology, to the uninformed there is nothing to obviate the truth that characters who achieve spiritual greatness in their own lifetimes (and not merely a prediction to do so in the future) are disproportionately those who were rich and then abandoned their lucrative careers for spiritual pursuits.[71]

This realm of knowledge that gold represents has its proper place within the larger framework of karmic logic, but taken alone it can represent a form of materialism anathema to spiritual pursuits. And such a materialism is all the more likely to be construed in a visual culture in which objects of knowledge are tangible, visible properties. For example, one can have *śraddhā* in the Buddha and in the truth of the systems of karma and *dakṣiṇā* and recognize that gold can be an indicator of karmic status; yet, having *śraddhā* in gold and adhering only to the gold standard of worth—as in, the richer you are, the better you are—is contrary to the teachings of the text as a whole. The possession of gold may be an indicator of one's spiritual status, but one should not trust in it and the truth for which it stands. One should trust in the Buddha, in monastics such as Maudgalyāyana, and in laymen like Koṭikarṇa.

When Koṭikarṇa remarks, ". . . but no one has *śraddhā* in me," just such a critique could be understood. Without laypeople having *śraddhā* in each other, there isn't the mutual trust necessary to create a Buddhist community that could work together. Furthermore, after Koṭikarṇa makes this remark, the text records that "then he smiled." This I understand as an acknowledgment of the irony that having *śraddhā* in gold and having *śraddhā* in the Buddha are not the same things, but rather an instance of synecdoche gone wrong. Though perhaps Koṭikarṇa speaks somewhat in jest when he marvels that everyone has *śraddhā* in gold, I think there is a truth underlying his irony—that the gold standard of karma can undermine the Buddha's dharma. Yet this truth threatens to be undermined once again, ironically, since the visual materialism of the

dharma that the Buddha is represented as teaching can help lead to just such a misunderstanding. It is desirable that the laity that supports the Buddhist monastic community possesses wealth, but other problems also arise when this desire leads to gold becoming fetishized.

Another possible reading of this valorization of gold follows a different metonymic history. In the same way that in the Brāhmaṇas the object of *śraddhā* shifted from a god to the sacrificial officiant (*ṛtvik*) or the rite performed (Hacker 1963: 188)—loosely stated, from an object, to a mediator or a means—it seems that the object of *śraddhā* similarly shifted in the *Divyāvadāna* from the system of karma to one means of advancing within that system (i.e., making offerings and having the resulting *dakṣiṇā* assigned to a beneficiary) to the currency used to make this occur—here objectified as gold. Perhaps Koṭikarṇa's remark that everyone has *śraddhā* in gold and no one has *śraddhā* in him is a twofold lament: first, that no one has *śraddhā* in him as a speaker of the truth regarding the system of karma and the process of *dakṣiṇā;* and second, that gold has become an icon for these phenomena. Koṭikarṇa's smile, then, could be an ironic recognition of this metonymic slippage—the confusion between object and means.

The Logic of Giving

Yet, it is easy to understand how this slippage might have occurred. Practically speaking, one who has *śraddhā* in the system of karma and the efficacy of *dakṣiṇā* should follow the Buddhist moral code and make offerings to proper recipients at the proper times. In the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, however, the former is often subsumed within the latter; or, put another way, proper behavior is reduced to proper giving.

In the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, for example, when the hungry ghosts explain the karmic logic of their situations, they tell of the bad things they did, such as butchery and adultery, as well as the good things—more specifically, following the Buddhist moral code. Yet when the former butcher, the former adulterer, and the former brahman woman ask Koṭikarṇa to inform their children to stop their evil ways, they ask only that their children offer alms to the noble Mahākātyāyana from time to time and then direct the reward in their names. No mention is made of following the Buddhist moral code. They seem to think that if their children make offerings to the noble Mahākātyāyana and assign the merit to them, their children will avert a bad rebirth and they themselves will gain sufficient merit to one day move on to a better existence.

This same kind of essentializing is also evident when the former brahman woman bemoans her fate to Koṭikarṇa. As she explains, "Since I gave alms to the noble Mahākātyāyana, I should have been reborn in the excellent company of the gods of the Trāyastriṃśa."[72] Though she may also have done other good deeds, making offerings to the noble Mahākātyāyana is the only deed she chooses to mention, and that alone seems to be sufficient to get one into heaven.[73]

As one who possesses the mental state of *bhakti* engages in the act of prayer, one who possesses the mental state of *śraddhā* engages in the act of giving. This aspect or consequence of *śraddhā* is also found in brahmanical texts. On the basis of passages in the Upaniṣads and Brāhmaṇas, Hermann Oldenberg (1896: 448–450) tries to extrapolate from the connection between *śraddhā* and *dakṣiṇā* and connect *śraddhā* more directly with gift giving. Likewise, in regard to the *Bhagavad Gītā*, Paul Hacker (1963: 189) explains,

> In connexion with "giving," the first of two constituents (originally "trust") appears as respect for the person on whom a gift is bestowed, a respect that abstains from criticizing the weakness of the recipient of the gift, acknowledges this merits, sympathizes with him, etc.; the second constituent (originally "desire") has taken the form of zeal in bestowing the gift.

In the Pali materials, this active component of *śraddhā* is also found, though it is not explicitly labeled as giving. As Nāgasena in the *Milindapañha* explains, "*saddhā* has the characteristic of leaping forward."[74] Gethin (1992a: 111, 115), in turn, concurs: "*saddhā* is seen primarily as important as initiating spiritual practice," and "the arising of confidence provides the motivation to act."

To the extent that *śraddhā* is "the motivation to act," in the *Divyāvadāna* this act is the offering of a gift. In the case of the children of those hungry ghosts to whom Koṭikarṇa spoke, having *śraddhā* entails offering the gift of alms to the noble Mahākātyāyana. In the case of Koṭikarṇa, by contrast, having *śraddhā* entails offering the gift of himself to the Buddha.

When Koṭikarṇa finally returns home after his travels among the hungry ghosts, as his parents cry tears of joys and regain their sight, Koṭikarṇa speaks his first words to his parents in twelve years:

> Mother, Father, permit me. Because my *śraddhā* is true, I want to go forth as a monk from home to homelessness.[75]

Koṭikarṇa's parents are distraught at his request and beg him not to go forth as a monk until after they die. Koṭikarṇa relents and agrees to wait.

Koṭikarṇa hasn't seen his parents in twelve years, and they haven't yet conversed, but he nevertheless wants to abandon his family immediately and offer himself as a Buddhist disciple. Why? My sense is that Koṭikarṇa's *śraddhā* motivates him to give, and he wants to give the best possible gift to the best possible recipient. As the Buddha explains in the *Saṅgharakṣita-avadāna*, "There is no better gift for a tathāgata than a gift of new disciples."[76]

I hope that I have shown in this section on *śraddhā* that there is a strong epistemelogical connection in the *Divyāvadāna* between seeing and believing and an equally strong ethical connection between seeing and giving. Moreover, a commitment to this epistemology necessitates a commitment to giving. These realms are perforce connected. In the section that follows, I will consider another paradigm of thinking and doing that seems to function within a similar epistemological and ethical universe. This paradigm involves the term *prasāda*.

PART II

The Practice of *Prasāda*

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3

Agency and Intentionality

What the eyes do not see, the heart does not grieve over.

—José Saramago, *Blindness*

While some characters in the *Divyāvadāna* need to be convinced of the workings of karma before they make offerings to the Buddha and the monastic community, others are inspired to do so immediately upon seeing certain objects. One scenario that occurs frequently in the text can be called the seeing-*prasāda*-giving-prediction typology. It runs as follows: a being sees the Buddha (*darśana*), *prasāda* arises in him or her, and then the being makes the Buddha an offering (*dāna*), at which time the Buddha foretells the reward that the donor will accrue as a result of his or her gift (*vyākaraṇa*). This scenario can be seen, for example, at the beginning of two consecutive avadānas in the text—the *Brāhmaṇadārikā-avadāna* and the *Stutibrāhmaṇa-avadāna*. In the former, a brahman's daughter sees the Buddha, *prasāda* arises in her, and then she offers the Buddha some barleymeal as alms. The Buddha then tells her that as a result of her offering, thirteen eons in the future, she will attain awakening as the solitary buddha named Supraṇihita (Resolute). In the latter, it is a brahman who sees the Buddha and in whom *prasāda* arises; he, in turn, offers the Buddha a verse of poetry and is told that twenty eons in the future, he will attain awakening as the solitary buddha named Stavārho (Praiseworthy).

This sequence of events, as well as variations upon it, occurs with sufficient frequency in the text to merit questioning its grammar

and significance as a trope. Through an examination of this trope and the discourse of *prasāda* that it contains, I hope to elucidate certain Buddhist conceptions regarding the iconic value of particular individuals and objects as well as a particular sociology and logic of giving. Engaging with these phenomena, in turn, raises intriguing questions regarding the role of intentionality in the making of offerings, who does and doesn't benefit from the making of such offerings, and what all this might indicate about the world outside the text.

In the exegesis that follows, I will examine this seeing-*prasāda*-giving-prediction typology, focusing specifically on the mental state of *prasāda*. Why does *prasāda* arise? What does its arising lead to? In whom does it arise, and in whom should it arise? In addressing these questions, I will discuss the various "agents of *prasāda*" (*prāsādika*) and the visual medium through which they operate, and then what happens when *prasāda* is conveyed to an individual—the compulsion that arises to make offerings, the location and degree of the agency involved, and the extraordinary rewards that such offerings yield.

Prasāda and *Prāsādika*

In Buddhist discourse, *prasāda* and *śraddhā* have sufficient semantic overlap such that one has often been defined by the other. Such synonymy is evident in Buddhist scholastic sources in both Sanskrit and Pali,[1] and also in the sutta materials of the Pali canon.[2] In English sources, this apparent synonymy means that *prasāda*, like *śraddhā*, has often been translated as "faith." This interchangeability of *prasāda* and *śraddhā* is even seen at times in the *Divyāvadāna*,[3] though as I will argue, the terms mediate seeing and giving in distinctly different ways.

In terms of etymology, *prasāda* can be explained as a nominalized form of the causative of *pra* + √*sad*. Its basic meanings include "clearness," "calmness," "graciousness," and "serene joy," and more commonly, "food that has been offered to images of the gods." In an essay on the term *pasāda*, the Pali equivalent to Sanskrit *prasāda*, Edith Ludowyk-Gyomroi (1943: 82) defines it more specifically as "a mental attitude which unites deep feeling, intellectual appreciation and satisfaction, clarification of thought and attraction towards the teacher."[4] Rupert Gethin (1992a: 112), in turn, notes that *pasāda* "conveys at the same time notions of a state of mental composure, serenity, clarity or purity, and trust."[5] As Gethin also notes, however, "it is almost impossible to translate effectively."

While I agree with Gethin's assessment and have therefore chosen to leave *prasāda* untranslated, the term does have a very specific meaning and function in the *Divyāvadāna*. Furthermore, the typology of *prasāda* that I mentioned above differs considerably from what is found in the *Avadānaśataka*,

an earlier Mūlasarvāstivādin avadāna compilation,[6] let alone from the typologies of *pasāda*.[7] In an effort to explain the meaning and function of *prasāda* in the *Divyāvadāna*, and the seeing-*prasāda*-giving-prediction typology, I will begin with an examination of the word *prāsādika*.

The term *prāsādika* is constituted etymologically by *prasāda* and an agentive suffix. In other words, that which is *prāsādika* is an agent of *prasāda*. One common usage of this term is in the sense of "attractive." Objects so called attract attention or interest; they draw others in to see them, and at the same time they convey a kind of "graciousness" (*prasāda*) such that others become "pleased" (*prasanna*). In numerous instances throughout the text, *prasāda* is conjoined with two other words denoting external beauty to form a synonymic string of descriptions—"beautiful, good-looking, and attractive" (*abhirūpo darśanīyaḥ prāsādikaḥ*). This tripartite expression is used to describe newborn children,[8] men,[9] women,[10] the ascetic Gautama,[11] nymphs,[12] *kinnara* girls,[13] as well as male and female hungry ghosts.[14]

In the context of the seeing-*prasāda*-giving-prediction typology, however, *prāsādika* doesn't have the sense of "attractive." The sense it does have is difficult to explain; it is easier to describe what something that is *prāsādika* does than what it means. Generally it is the Buddha and Buddhist practitioners who are said to be *prāsādika*. They are, quite literally, "agents of *prasāda*," and as such they instill *prasāda* in others. For example, in a long and recurring list of descriptive epithets of the Buddha, it is said that "he instills *prasāda* and his followers instill *prasāda*."[15] Two parrot chicks also make this observation about the Buddha in the *Śukapotaka-avadāna*.[16] In the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* and the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna*, it is the noble Mahākātyāyana and the venerable Mahākāśyapa, respectively, who instill *prasāda*. Each is said to "instill *prasāda* through his body and instill *prasāda* through his mind."[17]

This *prasāda*, in turn, is conveyed almost exclusively though the medium of sight—individuals see an agent of *prasāda*, such as the Buddha, and then *prasāda* arises in them. In the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, for example, a brahman woman sees the noble Mahākātyāyana and then her "mind is filled with *prasāda*."[18] Likewise, in the *Supriya-avadāna*, one thousand robbers see the Buddha and the monastic community made up of his disciples and then "cultivate *prasāda* in their minds."[19]

What it means to be *prāsādika* is further elucidated in the *Mākandika-avadāna*. When the mendicant Mākandika first sees the Buddha, he observes that the Buddha "is *prāsādika* and is worthy of being seen."[20] The text then continues:

> At the sight of him, [the mendicant Mākandika] was pleased and delighted. He then reflected, "Such an ascetic as this one is *prāsādika*, worthy of being seen, and captivates everyone."[21]

The expressions with which *prāsādika* is juxtaposed help to illustrate the term's semantic range. The Buddha is "worthy of being seen" or "very good-looking" (*pradarśanīya*), and as this term is a gerundive, it also has the sense of an imperative—"he should be seen." This juxtaposition of terms is particularly interesting because elsewhere, as in the Koṭikarṇa story in the Pali *Vinaya, pāsādika* is followed by "worthy of *pasāda*" (*pasādanīya*).[22] Here, however, there seems to have been a switching of gerundives, as though "worthy of *pasāda*" and "worthy of being seen" were somehow interchangeable; or, perhaps, that there was a similarity between an injunction to see the Buddha and one to cultivate *prasāda*. I will return to this idea later.

The last epithet in the passage quoted above describes the power that the Buddha has over others. He "captivates everyone" (*sakalajanamanohārī*)—more literally, he "grabs" (*hārī*) the "minds" (*mano*) of "all" (*sakala*) "people" (*jana*). Though frequently it is *prasāda* that arises in the "minds" or "hearts" (*citta*) of those people who have been grabbed by his sight, in this instance only "pleasure" (*prīti*) and "delight" (*prāmodya*) arise in Mākandika. As the rest of the story makes clear, Mākandika doesn't have the right disposition for *prasāda* to arise in him. He merely becomes enamored with the Buddha's good looks, thinking him to be "attractive" and hence a good match for his daughter. I will return to this episode in chapter 6.

Stereotyped interactions between laypeople and solitary buddhas also suggest that *prasāda* is conveyed through a visual medium. In the *Meṇḍhaka-avadāna*, for example, a certain householder and his family see a solitary buddha who "instills *prasāda* through his body and instills *prasāda* through his mind."[23] Furthermore, as the text explains, "those great beings teach the dharma through deeds not words."[24] Solitary buddhas, in short, are not verbal teachers. They convey Buddhist teachings and *prasāda* through bodily action, and these are learned and instilled by seeing. So, as the text continues,

> like a royal goose with outstretched wings, he flew up into the sky and began to perform the miraculous deeds of causing fire and heat, making rain and lightning. Magic quickly wins over the ordinary person. Like trees cut down at the roots, they fell prostrate at his feet and began to make fervent aspirations.[25]

Most often *prāsādika* objects exercise their power in a visual domain. While in this trope, which occurs repeatedly in the *Divyāvadāna*,[26] no mention is made of *prasāda* arising in those who see a solitary buddha, the sight of his visual sermon, a series of miraculous deeds, does prove to be karmically effective. Whoever sees these deeds undergoes a change of heart that leads him or her to make a fervent aspiration for some karmic goodness in the future.

Such examples testify to the enormous karmic benefits of seeing the dharma embodied or displayed. Solitary buddhas offer no verbal teachings of the dharma, only visual ones, and even without the mechanism of *prasāda* in effect, the sight of these visual spectacles is incredibly effective. While the Buddhist community "may have had no intention of establishing thaumaturgy as a means of propaganda" (Lamotte 1988: 51), other than the Buddha's condemnation of miracles in the *Jyotiṣka-avadāna*[27] (and this too is made ambiguous by context[28]), there is no criticism of miracle-working in the *Divyāvadāna*.[29] Seeing the dharma inspires and incites, and here the power of such seeing seems to have surpassed the discourse of *prasāda*.

Conversely, there are other objects in the *Divyāvadāna* that are not directly defined as *prāsādika* but nevertheless function as "agents of *prasāda*." For example, in the *Maitreya-avadāna*, monks ask the Buddha to display the undisturbed remains of the perfectly awakened Kāśyapa so that at the sight of them, they can "cultivate *prasāda* in their minds";[30] in the *Kunāla-avadāna*, the monk Upagupta asks King Aśoka whether he would like to see the deity who witnessed the Buddha's birth "for the sake of further increasing the king's *prasāda*";[31] in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, a caravan leader sees a stūpa for the perfectly awakened Kāśyapa and "becomes even more full of *prasāda*";[32] in the *Brāhmaṇadārikā-avadāna*, a brahman "becomes full of *prasāda*"[33] when he sees the Buddha's magnificent tongue; in the *Mākandika-avadāna*, King Udayana sees his wife Śyāmāvatī miraculously stop the arrows that he fires from his bow, and when he then hears that she is a disciple of the Buddha and that she has directly experienced the reward of the nonreturner, "he becomes full of *prasāda*";[34] and in the *Kunāla-avadāna*, it is said that King Aśoka's "*prasāda* arose particularly at the Bodhi tree, where he thought, 'Here the Blessed One perfectly awakened to unsurpassed perfect awakening!' "[35] In terms of the ability of these respective objects to produce *prasāda* in others, the *Divyāvadāna* appears to present no hierarchy of value. Buddhas may be more karmically advanced than arhats, and one object may be a more valuable than another as a field of merit, but all are represented as equally efficacious agents of *prasāda*.

Images of the Buddha, whether magically produced by the Buddha himself or generated in the mind of a practitioner, are also shown to instill *prasāda*. In the *Brāhmaṇadārikā-avadāna* and elsewhere, it is said that when buddhas manifest their smiles, rays of light emerge from their mouths to alleviate the torments of beings in the hot and cold hells. Then, "in order to engender their *prasāda*, the Blessed One manifests a magical image of himself for them to see."[36] Likewise in the *Prātihārya-sūtra*, "a crowd of people become full of *prasāda*"[37] when they see the Buddha carrying on a dialog with a magical image that he had created of himself. In the *Cakravartivyākṛta-avadāna*, by contrast,

it is an image of the Buddha envisioned during the practice of *buddhānusmṛti* that allows *prasāda* to arise.

Notice the agentive quality of phenomena that are *prāsādika*. Someone or something conveys *prasāda*, and the character who receives it becomes *prasanna*. In linguistic terms, that is to say, the nominalized causative of *pra √sad* leads to the nominalized past participle of the same verb. Likewise *prāsādika* objects seem to lead to the arising of *prasāda* in individuals; they are the cause, the arising of *prasāda* is the result, and the individuals are the fortunate recipients. In the *Māndhātā-avadāna*, for example, when the guildmaster's son sees the perfectly awakened Sarvābhibhū, "intense *prasāda* arises in him."[38] This is then glossed by saying that "he is one whose mind has been made to be possessed of *prasāda*."[39] Although no agent is specified, it seems that the arising of *prasāda* is caused not by the efforts of the guildmaster's son but by the power of the perfectly awakened Sarvābhibhū's visage.

In most instances involving the laity, the arising of *prasāda* requires no explicit effort on their part, no specific thought or deed other than simply catching sight of a *prāsādika* object. For them, *prasāda* is more of an experience than a practice, for they are shown not to act before *prāsādika* objects but to react. While some laypeople are said to "cultivate *prasāda*," as opposed to it just arising in them, this too appears to be more of a reflex act than a practiced, proactive response. It is this inevitability of response among certain groups of people, this power of *prāsādika* objects to generate *prasāda* in those who view them, that I will explore more fully in chapter 6.

Monks, on the other hand, can better control their response to *prāsādika* objects. As will become clear in chapter 4, they can choose to practice *prasāda*, not just passively experience it, and they can also choose to abandon the practice.

Secular *Prasāda*?

The term *prasāda* also occurs in the *Divyāvadāna* within a typology of seeing and giving that is formally similar to the one I have described but that is outside of the realm of religious ritual. In the previously mentioned *Stutibrāhmaṇa-avadāna*, the seeing-*prasāda*-giving-prediction typology is first worked through in the narrative present—a brahman sees the Buddha, *prasāda* arises in him, and he then offers the Buddha a stanza of poetry and is told of his future awakening as a solitary buddha. The Buddha then remarks that "in a previous time, [the brahman also] praised me with a single verse."[40] In the past, he explains, there was a king named Brahmadatta who ruled in the then-affluent city of Vārāṇasī. Also living there were a certain brahman and his wife. One day the

brahman's wife said to him, "Husband, it's the cold season. Go and say some favorable words to the king. Maybe then he'll offer us some shelter from the cold."[41] So, the brahman goes to the king and utters a verse in praise of the king's elephant, who is "dear and beloved to the whole world."[42] He exclaims,

> A body equal in form to Indra's elephant,
> handsome and with excellent features—
> you are honored with royal splendor,
> O great and mighty elephant,
> your appearance is magnificent by any standard of beauty!

Then the king, full of *prasāda*, utters this verse:

> My mighty elephant is dear and beloved,
> instilling joy and stealing the sight of men.
> You speak words in his praise,
> and so I grant you five excellent villages.[43]

Though here too the arising of *prasāda* leads to the making of an offering (i.e., five excellent villages), this example makes it clear that the occurrence of *prasāda* isn't restricted to what might be thought of as the religious realm. Such categories as "religious" and "secular" are simply not recognized in the *Divyāvadāna*. In fact, such a categorization runs counter to the logic of the text, for it presents Buddhist teaching as a kind of natural law that fully permeates the social world, blind to such distinctions as "religious" and "secular."

In short, *prasāda* isn't just a kind of faith. It is a mental state that occurs within different social realms in response to sensory contact with certain phenomena. Though vision is the predominant form of sensory contact for this transmission of *prasāda*, here, in what is a rare exception, the mode of transmission is aural, not visual. While one might claim that the brahman's encomium is an "image-text" (Mitchell 1994: 89), a picture in words of the king's elephant that functions iconically as the elephant himself, it is nonetheless words, not a living object, that causes *prasāda* to arise in this case.[44]

Another seemingly secular instance of this phenomenon can be found in the *Jyotiṣka-avadāna*. There, a brahman is trying to sell two pieces of cloth, though he knows little of their quality. The householder Jyotiṣka tells him that one is used and the other unused, and that the used one is worth two hundred and fifty *kārṣāpaṇa* coins and the unused one is worth five hundred.

> "Why is that?" the brahman asked.
> "Brahman," Jyotiṣka said, "I'll let you see it before your eyes.
> Look here."

> He threw the unused one high into the air. It remained there like a canopy. Then he threw the used one. As soon as it was thrown, it fell down.
>
> The brahman saw this and was in awe. "Householder," he said, "you possess great magic and power."
>
> "Brahman," Jyotiṣka said, "show me the unused one again." [Jyotiṣka then took the unused piece of cloth and] threw it on top of a thorny boundary hedge, and it passed over without clinging. He threw the other, and it stuck on a thorn.
>
> The brahman was even more full of *prasāda* and said, "Householder, you possess great magic and power. Offer whatever is your intention [for the two pieces of cloth]."[45]

When the brahman first sees the magical properties of the unused piece of cloth, he is "in awe" (*paraṃ vismayam*)—more literally, the "highest" or "greatest" (*param*) "astonishment" or "amazement" (*vismayam*). When he witnesses this again, he is "even more full of *prasāda*," as though the former were, in fact, a kind of *prasāda* that was then extended "even more" when he witnessed another magical feat. Though Jyotiṣka possesses no magical powers, the brahman seems to think of Jyotiṣka as a kind of miracle worker, for twice he observes that Jyotiṣka possesses "great magic and power."

Though Jyotiṣka's performance involving the unused piece of cloth is not a visual sermon within the realm of religious teaching, his actions, like the miraculous deeds of a solitary buddha, do offer a form of visual instruction. His deeds appear miraculous to the brahman and cause *prasāda* to arise in him. These deeds attest not to the truth of a solitary buddha's powers but to the truth of an object's worth in the marketplace. They are testimonies to a different aspect of the "law of nature" (*dharmatā*). This parallel suggests that even though the text does not distinguish between "religious" and "secular," there may be some particularly close ties between what one might be tempted to classify as "religious" and "mercantile."

Sights One Never Tires of Seeing

There are also a number of instances in the *Divyāvadāna* when sights that instill *prasāda* are also said to be "sights one never tires of seeing" (*asecanakadarśana*). Though the exact etymology of this expression is unclear,[46] it does seem to mark certain objects as being somehow compulsively watchable, thus offering additional insight into what it means to be an "agent of *prasāda*" and what it means to gaze at such an object.

Most frequently, the term *asecanakadarśana* occurs as an epithet of a buddha. For example, in the *Māndhātā-avadāna,*

> when [a guildmaster's son] saw [the perfectly awakened Sarvābhibhū], who was adorned with the thirty-two marks [of a great man] and was a sight one never tires of seeing, intense *prasāda* arose in him. Since *prasāda* had been cultivated in his mind, he got down from his vehicle and bedecked the Blessed One with flowers made of four kinds of jewels.[47]

The expression is also used to describe stūpas. In the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna,* a caravan leader from the North Country donates a jeweled earring to an old couple to help repair a broken-down stūpa and then departs to dispose of his goods. After he returns,

> he saw that the stūpa had become a sight one never tires of seeing. And at the sight of it, his *prasāda* became even greater . . . Filled with *prasāda,* he gave the wealth that remained [from the sale of his earring] and a little more. . . .[48]

And in the *Saṅgharakṣita-avadāna,* as the monk Saṅgharakṣita stares out to sea, the narrative voice remarks that "the Blessed One has said that there are five things one never tires of seeing:

> A mighty elephant and a king,
> an ocean and a rocky mountain—
> one never tires from seeing these
> or a buddha, the best of blessed ones."[49]

A passage in the *Rudrāyaṇa-avadāna* affirms this notion for at least one object that is *asecanakadarśana*—the Buddha. In the story, painters come to King Bimbisāra's palace to paint an image of the Buddha, and then the text observes that "Lord buddhas are a sight one never tires of seeing."[50] That is why, presumably, "[the painters] would remain staring at whichever of the Blessed One's limbs they happened to look at, and they wouldn't be satisfied. Hence, they couldn't grasp the Blessed One's full appearance."[51]

This sentiment has a striking resonance with a description that is found in the commentary to the *Theragāthā* of the monk Vakkali, the wayward character in the Pali materials who was obsessed with looking at the Buddha. As I mentioned in chapter 2, Vakkali was "never satisfied with seeing the perfection of [the Teacher's] physical form."[52] Within the Pali discourse of *saddhā,* this is considered a fault. Vakkali is said to have cultivated *saddhā* to such an extreme that "because of the strength of his *saddhā,* he couldn't descend down the path of

vipassanā meditation."[53] In these materials, it is Vakkali's flaw that the Buddha is an object that he can never get enough of seeing.

In the *Divyāvadāna*, by contrast, there are objects that one can never get enough of seeing, such as the Buddha, and this seems to occur because of something inherent in the objects themselves. The painters in the *Rudrāyaṇa-avadāna* are never satisfied as they gaze at the Buddha, but this isn't a fault of theirs. It's simply the way things are, and the text does nothing to repudiate this behavior.

Prasāda Is Fundamental

The term *prasāda* also occurs in other contexts and typologies in the *Divyāvadāna* that testify to its seemingly intrinsic nature for Buddhists and its strong claims to truth. Compare, for example, the stereotypical admission of intent made by lay Buddhists in the Pali materials and in the *Divyāvadāna*. In the final words of a number of suttas in the *Majjhima-nikāya*, a layperson will praise the Buddha and then say, "I take refuge in the honorable Gotama, the dhamma, and the community of monks. Hereafter and for as long as I breathe, may the honorable Gotama consider me a disciple who has taken the refuges."[54] Variations of this vow occur throughout the *Divyāvadāna*, but the layperson making the vow always includes that he or she will be "a disciple who is full of *prasāda*."[55] Possessing *prasāda* seems to be essential for being a good Buddhist—even perhaps for being a Buddhist at all.

The importance of *prasāda* in the *Divyāvadāna* can also be seen in the valorization of what is known in Pali as the four "principal trusts" (*aggappasāda*). While in the Pali sources these are statements that are to be trusted, in the *Divyāvadāna* they are "declarations of truth" (*satyavākya*) that have enormous power to effect change.[56] In the *Prātihārya-sūtra*, for example, King Prasenajit of Kośala is deceived into thinking that his son, Prince Kāla, has been soliciting women in his harem. Merciless by nature, the king has Kāla's hands and feet cut off. When Kāla bemoans his fate, wondering why the Buddha doesn't pay attention to his condition, the Buddha then instructs Ānanda to go to Kāla, place his hands and feet back where they belong, and recite a declaration of truth so that they will be restored to their original condition:

> Having approached, put Prince Kāla's hands and feet back in their proper place. Then say,
>
> [i] Among those beings who have no feet, two feet, or many feet, and among those who have form or have no form, and those who

are conscious or are without consciousness or are neither-conscious-nor-without-consciousness, a perfectly awakened tathāgata arhat is said to be the best.

[ii] Among those dharmas that are conditioned or are unconditioned, detachment is said to be the best.

[iii] Among communities, groups, gatherings, or assemblies, the monastic community made up of a tathāgata's disciples is said to be the best.

By this truth, by this declaration of truth, may your body be restored to the way it was before![57]

Ānanda then does as the Buddha instructs, and Kāla's body is restored to its original condition.

This declaration of truth that Ānanda recites at the Buddha's bidding is a version of the first, third, and fourth of the principal trusts.[58] Setting aside the issue of how to account for these different versions, notice that Ānanda does not express some kind of "trust" in these assertions. He simply states them,[59] and then says that "by this truth, by this declaration of truth"[60] may Prince Kāla's body be restored. What in Pali are propositions to be trusted are here propositions to be accepted as truth. And if there were any doubts about the truth of these propositions, the very truthfulness of Ānanda's declaration of truth, which by convention only works when the truth has been stated, is then visibly demonstrated with the restoration of Kāla's body. Likewise demonstrated is the transformative power that this truthfulness seems to possess. *Prasāda* is true, and truth is efficacious.

Prasāda, Intentionality, and Exchange

Understanding *prasāda*, however, involves more than enumerating the "agents of *prasāda*" and discussing the connections between *prasāda*, visuality, and truth. Within the seeing-*prasāda*-giving-prediction typology, *prasāda* is not just a mental state that arises in response to seeing someone or something—it also involves a compulsion to give. It is this intentionality of *prasāda* that helps explain the connection between *prasāda* and giving, and the unique status of the *prasāda*-initiated gift.

The kind of giving that results from *prasāda* and the form of exchange that it helps constitute is well illustrated in the *Sahasodgata-avadāna* in the interactions between the boy Sahasodgata, the householder who is his boss, and a group of five hundred merchants.[61] Though *prasāda* in this story does not arise

from seeing a *prāsādika* object, the reason for its arising and the giving that ensues follows a model of exchange that helps to explain the basic mechanics of the experience of *prasāda*.

In the *Sahasodgata-avadāna*, the boy Sahasodgata takes a job as a day laborer helping a householder to build a home so that he can earn five hundred *kārṣāpaṇa* coins, the amount required to feed the community of monks led by the Buddha. This offering of food, he has been assured, will lead him to a good rebirth where he can indulge in the same pleasures that he has seen represented on a wheel of existence. Since Sahasodgata is frail, he and householder agree that he should only be paid if the householder is satisfied with his work. Once at work, Sahasodgata tells "popular stories"[62] that captivate his coworkers. In response, "they follow his every footstep, though he works very quickly, so that they won't miss hearing his story."[63] In this way, they double their output. When Sahasodgata's boss hears about this, he starts to give Sahasodgata twice his daily wage. Then this dialog ensues:

> "Uncle," [Sahasodgata] said, "why are you giving me twice the daily wage?"
>
> "Son," he said, "I'm not giving you twice the daily wage. Rather, since I'm possessed of *prasāda*, I'm doing the duty of one who has *prasāda*."
>
> "Uncle," he said, "if you are full of *prasāda* toward me, then hold onto it yourself until the work on your house is done."[64]

Here the householder makes it clear that though Sahasodgata is receiving twice the amount of his wage, he is not being paid twice. He is being paid his proper wage plus an additional sum that is the result of a kind of "duty" (*adhikāra*)[65]—a compulsion, as it were, incumbent upon one who has *prasāda*. Hence, "doing the duty of one who has *prasāda*" means making an offering as a result of the duty of *prasāda*.

Glossed in another way, this "duty of one who has *prasāda*" (*prasannādhikāra*) might be thought of as a token or, perhaps, a fulfillment of having *prasāda*. As Gregory Schopen (1996: 98–99) observes,

> Edgerton [in his *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary*] suggests that *prasannādhikāra* means here "service tendered by one who is kindly disposed, i.e. service of friendship," but this seems to be a little off. The householder is not tendering a "service" but making a gift, and not from friendship but from gratitude for a service done for him. He is, then, perhaps more precisely saying: "Son, I am not giving two days wages, but I, being grateful, am giving a token of my gratitude."

Schopen's redefinition is helpful, but I would like to make an additional corrective by tweaking it with regard to two issues: the nature of *prasāda*-initiated giving and the location of agency.

This issue of the giving that occurs while "doing the duty of one who has *prasāda*" (*prasannādhikāraṃ* + √*kṛ*) is discussed most succinctly by Schopen (1996: 92–100) in the context of an argument about the ownership of Buddhist monasteries. On the basis of various passages in Mūlasarvāstivādin texts, Schopen argues that monasteries given to the monastic community were not debt-free gifts. In return, the recipient monks were obligated to perform a number of acts benefiting the monastery's donor: most notably, the recitation of verses and the assigning of the resultant merit. "This arrangement," Schopen (1996: 100) remarks, "looks . . . less like a gift than an exchange of mutual benefits."

But from a somewhat different perspective, these offerings of monasteries are, in fact, archetypal gifts. As Maurice Godelier (1999: 43–45) writes in *The Enigma of the Gift*, within the logic of gift exchange and not commercial exchange,

> to give . . . means to transfer without alienating, or to use the legal language of the West, to give means to cede the right of use without ceding actual ownership . . . [for] the giver continues to be present in the thing given . . . [it] does not become detached from his (physical or legal) person, and this presence is a force, that of the rights he continues to exercise *over the thing given* and through it *over the recipient* who accepts it.

Godelier (1999: 48) then goes on to explain that "a gift creates a debt that cannot be cancelled by a counter-gift . . . [and] the debt creates an obligation to give in return."

Illustrative of this process is a passage from the *Śayanāsanavastu* (Śay-v 37.7–38.13), also cited by Schopen, that contains another instance of one "doing the duty of one who has *prasāda*." In this passage, a householder hears a monk reciting a verse for the sake of donors who have died and decides to have a monastery built so that a monk will recite verses on his behalf, both now and after his death. The householder then has a monastery constructed, but no monks live there and hence no verses are recited for his benefit. In short, he receives no return on his investment. To help make the monastery productive, he then assigns the monastery to the monk Upananda. However, Upananda, one of the "group of six" (*ṣaḍvargika*) monks and a notorious slacker in regard to monastic regulations,[66] lives elsewhere, and the monastery remains empty. A pilgrim monk then arrives in town and sees the empty monastery. With Upananda's consent, he takes up residence in the monastery and proceeds to take excellent care of it.

When the householder hears of this, he is "pleased" (*prāmodya*). He then goes there in person, and when he sees the excellent condition of the monastery, he is "full of *prasāda*" (*abhiprasanna*). Thereafter he presents that mendicant with some cloth. Upananda then protests to the mendicant that since the monastery was assigned to him, he should turn over the cloth to him. All this is then reported to the Buddha who concludes that "when someone has *prasāda* toward another, and does the duty of one who has *prasāda* [i.e., makes an offering as a result of *prasāda* to that person], that thing belongs to that person alone. But an acquisition connected with the rainy-season retreat belongs to Upananda."[67]

In other words, any income or property that accrued in the monastery during the rainy season belongs to Upananda (Schopen 1996: 91), but an offering that results from actualizing the duty that arises from *prasāda* is the property of the intended recipient. The pilgrim monk has cleaned the monastery—that is, he has given the gift of cleaning the monastery—and when the householder sees that this is the case, that he has received something for nothing, the obligation to give in return arises. The gift that he offers in return, the piece of cloth, is not governed by the normal rules of exchange that function within the monastery. Following the Buddha's ruling, the visiting monk can keep the cloth that the householder has given him. As Schopen (1996: 98) remarks, "it is the private property of the monk involved and forms thus—along with the inheritance of family property—a part of the private wealth that the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* allows monks to have."

This logic of gift exchange is also evident later in the *Sahasodgata-avadāna*. Five hundred merchants, after successfully completing a voyage, return to Rājagṛha. Though they're hungry, "there was nothing to be had in Rājagṛha, regardless of money, since it was a lunar holiday."[68] Thinking that whoever feeds the monastic community might have some food left over for sale, they approach the householder, Sahasodgata's former employer, in whose home Sahasodgata is feeding the community of monks led by the Buddha. The householder then directs them to Sahasodgata:

> They approached him and said, "Householder's son, please give us whatever food is left over. We'll pay for it."
>
> "I won't offer it to you for a price," he said. "Instead, I'll offer it in just the same way [as I did to the community of monks led by the Buddha]." He then satisfied them with food and drink.
>
> They then went to the householder and said, "Householder, you have profited and gained much—for with food and drink you have satisfied in your home the community of monks led by the Buddha as well as these five hundred merchants."

> "The householder's son has profited and gained much," he said. "He, not I, has satisfied the community of monks led by the Buddha with food and drink."[69]

Though Sahasodgata explains to the merchants that he offers them food in the same way that he offered food to the monastic community, these two food offerings apparently function within different realms. Sahasodgata's offering to the monastic community, it seems to me, can be understood within the logic of commercial exchange, for the objects of exchange are wholly alienable (i.e., *kārṣāpaṇa* coins and karmic merit), and after the exchange, "each party is once more independent and free of obligations to others" (Godelier 1999: 43).[70] Yet, Sahasodgata's offering to the merchants functions within the realm of gift exchange. It is given with no expectation of commercial benefit, and—as will become clear in what follows—he is nervous when it appears that it does.

The merchants, nevertheless, comment that Sahasodgata "has profited and gained much" from feeding the respective communities of monks and merchants. In response, the householder remarks that Sahasodgata has gained much, but he mentions only Sahasodgata's offering to the monastic community. The householder, it seems, only recognizes the profit that Sahasodgata has accrued from his transaction with the monks and not the profit he has earned from his gift to the merchants. This latter gift has created a debt, and such a debt creates an obligation to give in return. In this case, the debt of the merchants will result in huge financial rewards for Sahasodgata.

After the merchants have spoken with the householder, the caravan leader urges the rest of the merchants to offer Sahasodgata whatever they have to spare:

> Since they were already full of *prasāda* [toward Sahasodgata] and since they were encouraged by the caravan leader, [the five hundred merchants] gave as many jewels, such as gems and pearls, as they could. A great collection was amassed.
>
> "Son, take it," the caravan leader said.
>
> "Uncle," he said, "I didn't sell [you that food and drink]."
>
> "Son, nor are we paying you," the caravan leader said. "And if you calculate the value [of all this, you'll see that] many hundreds of meals like this can be had with [just] a single one of these jewels. Since we're full of *prasāda* toward you, we're doing the duty of one who has *prasāda*. Take it."
>
> "Uncle," he said, "I fed the community of monks led by the Buddha so that I could be reborn among the gods. Therefore, whatever was left over was given to all of you. If I take this, it stands to reason that I won't be reborn among the gods."

> "Son," the caravan leader said, "do you have *śraddhā* in the Blessed One?"
>
> "Yes, uncle, I have *śraddhā* [in him]."
>
> "Then go ask the Blessed One."
>
> [Sahasodgata] then approached the Blessed One, and having approached, he venerated with his head the feet of the Blessed One and then sat down at a respectful distance. The householder's son said this to the Blessed One: "Blessed One, after feeding the community of monks led by the Buddha, I gave the leftover food and drink to some merchants. Possessed of *prasāda* toward me, they [want to] do the duty of one who has *prasāda*. Am I permitted to take it or not?"
>
> "If they are possessed of *prasāda* and do the duty of one who has *prasāda* [i.e., make an offering as a result of *prasāda*]," the Blessed One said, "then take it."[71]

Sahasodgata is afraid that accepting this offering from the merchants will constitute the acceptance of a payment for the meal he has provided, and that this will jeopardize his goal in feeding the monks. In other words, he thinks that if he receives a cash payment now then he won't, in addition, receive the karmic payment of divine rebirth—that remuneration from the merchants may preclude remuneration from the monks. The Buddha explains, however, that he may accept the merchants' offering. Since it is an offering that results from the duty of *prasāda,* as in the above example from the *Śayanāsanavastu* regarding the ownership of monasteries, it isn't a payment that will negate his contract with the Buddhist community. He has still earned a divine rebirth.

Sahasodgata's offering to the monks, as I said previously, seems to adhere to the logic of commercial exchange. It is something like a payment—closer, perhaps, to a promissory note that will entitle the beneficiary to a divine rebirth. His offering to the merchants, however, adheres more closely to the logic of gift exchange, as does their counter-gift to him. The merchants have received food without payment—something for nothing, as it were—and they must give in turn.

This parallel between gift exchange and *prasāda* exchange is crucial: seeing a *prāsādika* object and receiving a gift both cause *prasāda* to arise in an individual.[72] The householder in the passage from the *Śayanāsanavastu* as well as the householder and the merchants in the *Sahasodgata-avadāna* all develop *prasāda* not from seeing an object that is conventionally described as *prāsādika* but from receiving a gift—respectively, a cleaning of one's monastery, double the labor from one's workforce, and a free meal. Regardless of the particular form of these *prasāda*-generating gifts, the result of receiving

them is the same: the recipient must do "the duty of one who has *prasāda*" (*prasannādhikāra*). Previously I glossed this as "a compulsion to give," but following the model of gift exchange, perhaps it should be understood as an "obligation to give in return."

This then raises the troubling question of how to explain the agency of offerings that result from the duty of *prasāda*. Edgerton and Schopen explain *prasannādhikāra* as the fulfillment of a desire or a duty of the giver. But my sense is that much of the agency of the action bypasses the predilections of the giver. It is as though the act which is the development or cultivation of *prasāda* leads to inevitable results, and those results will take place regardless of the giver's intentions. Much like the karma described in the *Abhidharmakośa* as "non-agitated" (*āniñja*)[73] or "determinate with regard to its result" (*vipāke niyataṃ hi*),[74] these acts necessarily lead to particular outcomes.

With regard to gift exchange, Godelier (1999: 45) remarks that "there is in the thing given a 'power' which works on the recipient and compels him to 'give in return.'" But how and where does one locate the forces that generate this power? In *The Gift*, Marcel Mauss (1990: 13) claims that the object given is "invested with life, often possessing individuality," and that "it seeks to return . . . to its 'place of origin' or to produce, on behalf of the clan and the native soil from which it sprang, an equivalent to replace it." Though Mauss's animist explanation has its critics,[75] I do think, following Mauss's insights, that the agency of the counter-gift that follows the gift of *prasāda* somehow resides in the gift of *prasāda* itself. It is generated by the force that is *prasāda*. Furthermore, this force is not a mundane power that is the product of a concatenation of social forces. In the text, it is understood to be in accordance with natural law, much in the same sense as Buddhist law or dharma. It is, to be vague, a *higher* power.

Now if this paradigm of exchange also holds for the seeing-*prasāda*-giving-prediction typology, then the gift of *prasāda* that *prāsādika* objects bestow can also be said to create a debt that necessitates a counter-gift. Yet the debt of *prasāda*, insofar as it falls within the logic of gift exchange, cannot easily be repaid. An identical counter-gift cannot be offered by ordinary mortals, for they cannot give the gift of *prasāda*, and even if they could, it would have little value for *prāsādika* entities such as the Buddha. Furthermore, even if such a gift could be offered it would still not erase the debt, "for the object that returns to its original owner is not 'given back,' but is 'given again,'" and this given-again gift is not sufficient to erase the debt incurred (Godelier 1999: 44).[76] Within this system, *prasāda* is an inalienable possession whose ownership can never be fully ceded. It may pass from *prāsādika* entities to the laity, but the latter can never fully control it. It may compel them to offer counter-gifts, but as ordinary

non-*prāsādika* beings, they will never be in a position to offer *prasāda* as a gift to anyone else.

The counter-gifts that are given, in fact, such as some barleymeal or a verse of poetry, have almost no use-value for their recipients. Though the text is not explicit in this matter, it does seem that the debt incurred has not been repaid in full—not even close.[77] My sense is that the debt remains until the recipients of *prasāda* give something more personal, something likewise inalienable, to the Buddhist community—namely, themselves. For as I mentioned at the end of the previous chapter, "there is no better gift for a tathāgata than a gift of new disciples" (Divy 341.19–21).[78]

So what then are the implications of equating the practice of viewing *prāsādika* objects and receiving a gift? From the economic standpoint of the monastic community, it certainly seems efficacious to have a class of objects that give the gift of *prasāda* endlessly to those who come and see them. These *prāsādika* objects, besides being inexhaustible gift-givers—efficient gift factories, as it were—are also incredibly efficient manufacturers of debt. Those who come and see them, and in whom *prasāda* arises, are indebted to the de facto caretaker of all *prāsādika* objects, the monastic community. Having received this gift of *prasāda*, this debt, they are prompted to give in turn, again and again, until they give themselves to the monastic community as monks and nuns. Even then, though, there is significant archeological evidence that monks and nuns were active donors at religious sites (Schopen 1997: 64). Perhaps these offerings can be understood as additional payments on longstanding arrears.

In the end, such economic analyses are not sufficient. The giving of gifts is a complex social act. As Mauss (1990: 79) explains, "these phenomena are at the same time juridical, economic, religious, and even aesthetic and morphological, etc." What the gift of *prasāda* produces is something very different from what monks produce through their assigning of merit. It is not a blessing or a boon, but a gift that necessitates additional gifting. Nevertheless, both receiving a gift and receiving the sight of a *prāsādika* object can cause *prasāda* to arise in the recipient, and in both instances this *prasāda* results in the recipient's making of an offering, with similar circulation patterns in each case. So what is the significance of equating these two systems of exchange? Why configure *prasāda*, the fundamental constituent of being Buddhist, as being a gift?

Rewards of *Prasāda*

Next in the seeing-*prasāda*-giving-prediction typology is the prediction that the Buddha makes as to the reward that an individual will receive for making an

offering that results from the duty of *prasāda*—that is, from making a *prasāda*-initiated counter-gift. Here, however, there is some slippage within the text as to what exactly leads an individual to attain a reward. In what follows, I will discuss various possibilities: the offering itself, the root of virtue that an offering constitutes, the fervent aspiration or declaration of truth that often follows an offering, and simply possessing the mental state of *prasāda* itself.

The explanation that it is the *prasāda*-initiated offering itself that produces the reward is made very clear in the *Māndhātā-avadāna*. As the Buddha concludes at the end of a brief story that follows the standard *prasāda* typology,

> The merchant Otkarika was none other than me at that time and at that juncture. Possessed of *prasāda*, I threw a handful of mung beans into the perfectly awakened Vipaśyin's bowl, and of that handful, four mung beans fell into his bowl and the rest fell on the ground. As a result of that action, I established kingship, lordship, and dominion over the four islands. As for that mung bean that dashed against the rim of his bowl and fell on the ground—as a result of that action, I surmounted the Trāyastriṃśa gods. Monks, if that mung bean had fallen in his bowl, given the situation, I would have established kingship, lordship, and dominion over gods and mortals alike.[79]

This explanation is also in evidence in the *Dānādhikaraṇa-mahāyānasūtra*, though the text does not mention *prasāda*. The text simply lists gifts and their results. For example,

> [9.] He gives an extensive gift that results in his obtaining extensive enjoyments. [10.] He gives a gift of food that results in his being free from the cravings of hunger. [11.] He gives a gift of drink that results in his being free from thirst everywhere in all his lives [yet to come].[80]

Elsewhere, however, it seems that an offering is valuable in that it functions as a root of virtue. As I discussed in the introduction, a root of virtue is a "virtuous deed" (*kuśala*), or the merit accrued from such a deed, that functions as both "root" and "capital" (*mūla*). It functions as a "root" in that it creates a foundation for more virtuous deeds, and it functions as "capital," for this virtuousness is like a currency that can be cashed in. This can be seen in the *Brāhmaṇadārikā-avadāna* and the *Stutibrāhmaṇa-avadāna*, both of which I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. In the former, a brahman's daughter offers barleymeal as alms to the Buddha, and this functions as a root of virtue for her reward. As the Buddha explains, "That brahman's daughter, Ānanda, by this root of virtue will not suffer a karmic downfall for thirteen eons."[81] In the latter, a certain

brahman offers the Buddha a poem, and he explains that "by this root of virtue he will not suffer a karmic downfall for twenty eons."[82]

In other instances, these *prasāda*-initiated offerings function as a root of virtue, and this, in turn, gives purchase on a fervent aspiration. In this common trope, characters begin their fervent aspirations with an acknowledgment that what they aspire for will occur through the agency of a root of virtue—that selfsame root of virtue that was engendered by the preceding offering. In the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, for example, as was cited before, a caravan leader donates a jeweled earring for the upkeep of a stūpa. When he later returns and sees the stūpa, which has been repaired during his absence, he is full of *prasāda:*

> Filled with *prasāda*, he gave the wealth that remained [from the sale of his earring] and a little more [to the stūpa]. Then he performed a great ceremony and made this fervent aspiration: "By this root of virtue may I be born in a family that is rich, wealthy, and prosperous; and may I obtain such virtues so that I may please and not displease just such a teacher as this one!"[83]

This is then confirmed at the end of the avadāna by the Buddha's explanation of what has transpired: "Since he made offerings to the stūpa of the perfectly awakened Kāśyapa and then made a fervent aspiration, as a result of that action, he was born in a family that was rich, wealthy, and prosperous."[84] Similar examples abound.[85]

Though the text seems to postulate that some offerings have fixed values—that they lead directly to particular results or that they constitute certain roots of virtue that can be used toward different ends—it is not always the case in the *Divyāvadāna* that a particular offering leads to a particular result or even that the making of an offering is itself the cause that leads to a particular result. There are variables, which the text sometimes chooses to emphasize, such as one's stockpile of merit. Ordinary mortals don't know the extent of their stockpiles of merit, so unbeknownst to them, one small offering could lead to a great reward, or perhaps to no significant benefit. Another important variable is the mental state of the donor. This requires some explanation.

In certain stories in the *Divyāvadāna*, it is clear that even offerings with little material worth or utility can have great value, great purchase on some future reward, if they are an outgrowth of a proper mental state such as *prasāda*. The *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna* provides a particularly graphic representation of this phenomenon. In the story, a leprous beggar woman sees the venerable Mahākāśyapa who, as previously mentioned, "instills *prasāda* through his body and instills *prasāda* through his mind,"[86] and decides to make him an offering.

> Then the venerable Mahākāśyapa, understanding her thoughts with his mind, held out his begging bowl. "If you have anything to spare, my sister, please put it in my bowl."
>
> Cultivating *prasāda* in her mind, she poured [some rice water] into his bowl. Then a fly fell in. She began to take it out when one of her fingers fell off into the rice water. She reflected, "Although the noble one, out of respect for my feelings, hasn't thrown [this rice water] away, he won't partake of it."
>
> Then the venerable Mahākāśyapa, understanding her thoughts with his mind, right before her eyes, sat down against the base of a wall and began to eat.
>
> She reflected, "Although the noble one, out of respect for my feelings, has partaken of this, he won't think of this food as a proper meal."
>
> Then the venerable Mahākāśyapa, understanding her thoughts, said this to that woman who was dependent on the city for alms: "Sister, I am happy! I can pass the whole day and night on the food [that you have given me]."[87]
>
> She became very excited. "The noble Mahākāśyapa has accepted alms from me!" Then, while cultivating *prasāda* in her mind for the venerable Mahākāśyapa, she died and was reborn among the gods of Tuṣita (Content).[88]

If the leprous beggar woman's offering of rice water (with finger) were to be judged by its use-value, even though Mahākāśyapa managed to make a meal of it, she no doubt would have earned very little merit. With the enumeration of offerings and their rewards in the *Dānādhikaraṇa-mahāyānasūtra* as a benchmark, an offering of some rice water probably wouldn't merit rebirth among the Tuṣita gods. While the woman may have been just one small offering away from attaining the karmic threshold that would allow her such an auspicious rebirth, the emphasis here is on how the mental state that leads to an act of giving can elevate even a mundane offering into something, karmically speaking, very valuable.

Throughout the *Divyāvadāna* there are numerous accounts of donors making offerings of items that have little market value and then the Buddha foretelling the great results that such offerings will bring. Likewise, there are also many accounts of individuals attaining some distinction, and then the Buddha explaining that this occurred because these individuals had previously made some particular offerings—once again, ones with little financial value.[89] Besides the leprous beggar woman's offering of some rice water, other offerings mentioned include a single lamp,[90] a lump of clay,[91] some barleymeal,[92] some rice gruel,[93]

and a stanza of poetry.[94] These offerings were karmically valuable, however, because of the mental states of the donors. What the text emphasizes is that the karmic value of an offering isn't determined exclusively by its material worth. Rather, it is determined by its worth as an object or practice plus the "worth" of the mental state. And what is stressed repeatedly in these accounts is that the mental state of *prasāda* is worth a great deal in terms of its karmic value.

This immense value of *prasāda* is made explicit in the *Indrabrāhmaṇa-avadāna*. Its value is simply inconceivable. As the Buddha explains,

> In this way buddhas are inconceivable,
> and the dharma of buddhas inconceivableas well.
> For those possessed of *prasāda* in the inconceivable,
> the result is likewise inconceivable.
>
> It is not possible to understand the extent
> of the virtues of those who are inconceivable,
> of those who turn the unobstructed wheel of dharma
> of perfectly awakened buddhas.[95]

Yet, the above verse makes no mention of any offering being made after the arising of *prasāda*. Indeed, there are some cases when *prasāda* arises in an individual, no explicit offering is made, and yet a great result is produced. For example, in the *Nāgakumāra-avadāna*, it is said that Nāgakumāra (Nāga Prince) is carried off by a *garuḍa* bird to the slopes of Mount Sumeru. There he sees monks engaging in meditation, study, yoga, and concentration.

> And seeing them, his mind was filled with *prasāda*. Possessing *prasāda*, he reflected, "These noble ones are truly free from the different kinds of suffering!" Then he died and passed away and was born in Vārāṇasī in a family of brahmans who performed the six duties of a brahman.[96]

Likewise in the *Cūḍapakṣa-avadāna*, the Buddha explains that though the five hundred wives of Udayana, king of the Vatsas, were burned in a fire, they were all pure and thereby upon their deaths all found good rebirths. Some of those women became "spontaneously arising beings" (*upapādukā*), some once-returners and stream-enterers, and, as the Buddha continues, "those women in the harem who had improved their minds through *prasāda* in me, after the dissolution of their bodies, were reborn in a favorable existence among the gods in heaven."[97] And in the *Pāṃśupradāna-avadāna*, the elder Upagupta, after bedecking the wicked Māra with a garland of animal carcasses and breaking his evil resolve, instructs him as follows:

> Listen, my friend. Many times you yourself have committed offenses against the Blessed One. There is no other way to wash away bad dharmas planted in the mind besides *prasāda* in the Tathāgata.[98]

In each of these instances, *prasāda* alone seems to be the cause of the rewards to come, not the making of an offering or even the intention to make an offering which, for some reason, is never fulfilled.[99] Possessing or cultivating *prasāda* is itself an act of considerable karmic value. In fact, *prasāda* alone, as the text makes clear elsewhere, constitutes the karmic currency of roots of virtue.[100] For example, in the *Sahasodgata-avadāna*, in the story of the past—which explains why, in the present, Sahasodgata has to take a job as a day laborer—Sahasodgata was a householder's son who spoke harshly of a solitary buddha. Later, however, that solitary buddha has compassion for him, and so flies up into the air and performs the standard miracles. Then, "with intense sincerity, the householder's son fell prostrate at his feet and began to make a fervent aspiration:

> Though I have uttered harsh words at someone so worthy of offerings from good people, may I not suffer from this deed. But since now my mind is full of *prasāda*, by this root of virtue may I be born in a family that is rich, wealthy, and prosperous, and may I obtain such virtues so that I may please and not displease a teacher even more distinguished than this one!"[101]

In short, *prasāda* is an exceptionally valuable karmic commodity. Its juxtaposition with the meager offerings it frequently generates only highlights its enormous yield, and—contrary to the form of the seeing-*prasāda*-giving-prediction typology—its great value and power is not necessarily contingent upon the making of offerings. It can generate its own rewards.

This independent figuration of *prasāda*, however, raises some intriguing problems for the gift-exchange model of *prasāda*. If *prasāda* arises in individuals and yet these individuals make no offerings, how do they deal with the "duty of one who has *prasāda*"? Aren't they compelled to give like those in the *Sahasodgata-avadāna?* Or is the act of cultivating *prasāda* itself a counter-gift?

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4

Participation and Exclusion

He spoke frequently of the past, it is true, not as something dead and forgotten however, but rather as something which we carry within us, something which fructifies the present and makes the future inviting.

—Henry Miller, *The Colossus of Maroussi*

In addition to detailing particular methods whereby a character can earn merit, the discourse on *prasāda* in the *Divyāvadāna* also elaborates a sociology of practice, and in doing so makes pointed claims about its beneficiaries. In contrast to the notion that offerings have fixed values and that the greater the material value of the item given the greater the reward—an idea that privileges those with greater financial resources—the practice of *prasāda* is seemingly more egalitarian. The only people excluded are the wealthy and fortunate.

As I mentioned previously, those in whom *prasāda* arises are generally individuals with little disposable income: a brahman's daughter whose husband is away collecting wood in the forest,[1] a bull about to be slaughtered,[2] a young woman with no job or family,[3] and so on. Yet the text also contains a metanarrative to this effect. In the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna,* there is a four-part discourse on the logic of giving that makes normative claims about who should be giving and the importance of the mental state that accompanies that act. In what follows, I will offer a close reading of the four parts of this story in an attempt to explain who it is that can and cannot make offerings within the *prasāda* paradigm and why that is the case.

Prasāda as Praxis: Beggars, Gods, and Kings

The first part of the narrative, which I have already discussed, describes the efficacy of cultivating *prasāda* and making even the most meager of offerings. A leprous woman who is dependent on the city of Śrāvastī for alms cultivates *prasāda* in Mahākāśyapa, offers him some rice water (complete with leprous finger), and as a result, dies and is reborn among the Tuṣita gods.

The second part of the narrative concerns Śakra and his attempt to follow the leprous woman's example. "Śakra, lord of the gods," the text explains, "saw the woman offering rice water, cultivating *prasāda* in her mind, and then dying, but he didn't see where she was reborn."[4] Śakra then approaches the Buddha and asks him about her whereabouts. The Buddha explains that she has been reborn among the Tuṣita gods—in an even higher realm of existence than the lord of the gods himself. "Since gods can look and come to know what is below them, but not what is above them,"[5] Śakra lost sight of the leprous woman when she entered the Tuṣita heaven. Then it occurs to Śakra,

> These mortals can't see [the results of] merit and demerit before their eyes, and yet they make offerings and perform meritorious deeds. I can see [the results] of merit right before my eyes, since I am appointed in the results of my own merit.[6] So why shouldn't I make offerings and perform meritorious deeds?[7]

With this in mind, Śakra disguises himself as a poor weaver working in a dilapidated house. Mahākāśyapa, "having pity for the destitute, for orphans, and for beggars,"[8] soon approaches the broken-down house and holds out his bowl for alms. Śakra fills his bowl, but Mahākāśyapa realizes that his offering is that of divine ambrosia and deduces that the "poor weaver" before him must be Śakra.

> "Kauśika," he says, "why do you create obstacles for those beings who suffer, especially when the Blessed One himself, a perfectly awakened tathāgata arhat, has completely uprooted that arrow of doubt and uncertainty that you have cultivated for so long?"
>
> "Noble Mahākāśyapa, you ask why I create obstacles for those beings who suffer. Well, these mortals can't see [the results of] merit before their eyes, and yet they make offerings and perform meritorious deeds. I can see [the results] of merit right before my eyes. So why shouldn't I make offerings? Indeed the Blessed One has said,
>
> > Meritorious deeds are to be performed.
> > Not performing meritorious deeds brings suffering.

> Those who perform meritorious deeds
> can rejoice in this world and in the next."[9]

The venerable Mahākāśyapa, however, offers no reply.

Śakra understands the Buddha's message correctly—one should perform meritorious deeds so that one can escape suffering—but what he doesn't understand is that he isn't a proper donor. The proper donor is one who is in need of merit, one who is suffering.

Earlier in the story, Mahākāśyapa makes it clear that helping the poor is his intention. When Mahākāśyapa is turned away from the householder Anāthapiṇḍada's door because, with his unkempt looks, he is mistaken for a non-Buddhist renunciant, he then takes the opportunity to serve (incognito) Buddhist "believers" (*śrāddha*). As he explains, "I'll go then and do good deeds for the poor."[10] In other words, he will receive offerings from the poor, as when he later receives rice water from the leprous beggar woman.

In corresponding versions of this story in Pali literature,[11] Mahākāśyapa also plays the role of benefactor to the poor by being a recipient of their offerings. But in those accounts a different sociology of giving is presented. For example, the objection that Kassapa (Skt., [Mahā]kāśyapa) makes to Sakka (Skt., Śakra) regarding the latter's attempt to give him alms is more explicit—not particularly different, simply more clear. As Kassapa explains in the *Udāna-aṭṭhakathā* and the *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā*, "You have committed a terrible deed, Kosiya (i.e., Sakka), in stealing away this opportunity from the unfortunate.[12] By making an offering to me today, any unfortunate person could obtain the position of an army general or a guildmaster."[13] Left unsaid, however, is whether a fortunate person could also have obtained such rewards from such an offering, and whether the mental state accompanying that act is significant.

A more important difference between the Pali versions of the story and the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna*, however, is in Śakra's reasoning for offering alms to Mahākāśyapa. In the *Udāna-aṭṭhakathā*, following Kassapa's above-cited rebuke, Sakka complains, "Bhante, who is more unfortunate than me?"[14] Kassapa replies, "How can you be unfortunate, enjoying as you do the glory of ruling over the gods?"[15] Sakka then goes on to explain that three divine beings have now become more effulgent than him, suggesting that an offering to Kassapa will lead to an increase in his own effulgence. Much the same is recounted in the *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā*.[16] In the version of the story in the *Udāna*, Sakka's explanation of his plight is brief: "We too need merit, Bhante Kassapa. We too should perform meritorious deeds."[17] In response, Kassapa doesn't reject Sakka's logic, but he redirects his critique at Sakka's deceptiveness. "That

may be so," Kassapa continues in the *Udāna-aṭṭhakathā* and the *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā*, "nevertheless, from now on you shouldn't deceive me like that and give me alms."[18]

In the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna*, by contrast, Śakra doesn't claim that he wants to make offerings because others are eclipsing his glory. Instead, what galls Śakra is the fact that others perform meritorious deeds blindly, without even seeing the results that such deeds will produce, while he can see the results of meritorious deeds "right before his eyes." With such foresight, why shouldn't he perform meritorious deeds? What follows is much the same as in the Pali materials: Mahākāśyapa complains that Śakra's offering of alms prevents someone less fortunate from doing the same, Śakra protests that he too should make offerings, and then Mahākāśyapa more or less signals his assent through his silence.

Here there is a significant difference, though, between the Pali materials and the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna*. In the Pali materials, Sakka's offering, however deceitful, earns him merit. This is clear from the following exchange between Kassapa and Sakka in the *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā:*

> "Since I was deceitful and made you an offering, is there virtue in it for me or is there not?"
>
> "There is, venerable one."[19]

But in the *Divyāvadāna*, Śakra earns no merit. Instead, each time Śakra fills Mahākāśyapa's bowl, the latter spills it out. When this is explained to the Buddha, he permits the monks to use covers for their begging bowls. In other words, not only is Śakra prevented from earning any merit from his offering, but this incident is also used to justify the establishment of a rule so that in the future only designated individuals will have their offerings accepted. Though there is no indication in the *Prātimokṣa-sūtra* of the Mūlasarvāstivādins that monastics should accept or reject the offerings of donors on the basis of their respective stockpiles of merit (Banerjee 1954), such a criterion does seem to be suggested in this case.[20] Within this discourse of *prasāda*, offerings are to be made by "those beings who suffer." Śakra, apparently, doesn't fit into this category.

The third part of the narrative concerns King Prasenajit and his attempt, like Śakra before him, to follow the leprous woman's example. He offers to feed the Buddha for seven days, and the Buddha accepts his invitation. So, the following day King Prasenajit serves and indulges him and the monastic community with fresh and fine foods. Meanwhile,

> a bowl-carrying beggar stood in the area of the elders cultivating *prasāda* in his mind. "This king," he thought, "can see [the results] of merit right before his eyes since he is appointed in the results of

> his own merit. Yet he is still unsatisfied with this merit, so he makes more offerings and performs more meritorious deeds."[21]

After all present finish eating and washing their hands, King Prasenajit sits down in front of the Buddha to listen to the dharma, and the following conversation ensues:

> "Your Majesty," the Blessed One said, "in whose name shall I assign the reward from the offering—in your name or in the name of that person who has earned more merit than you?"
>
> "The Blessed One has eaten the food that I have offered as alms," the King reflected. "Who else could have earned more merit than me?" With this in mind, he said, "Blessed One, may the Blessed One assign the reward from the offering in the name of that person who has earned more merit than me."
>
> The Blessed One then assigned the reward in the name of that bowl-carrying beggar. And it went on like this for six days.[22]

As a result, the king is despondent, for he earns no merit from his offerings. Noticing the king's condition, the king's ministers make the necessary arrangements so that on the final day of the king's food offering, the Buddha will assign the reward to him. The ministers order an enormous amount of food to be prepared, and make arrangements so that at the next day's meal half the food will be served to the monks and half will be dumped on the ground. On the following day, this is precisely what takes place, and though the bowl-carrying beggars are eager to accept the food that has already fallen on the ground, they are prevented from doing so.

> Then that one bowl-carrying beggar said, "Though the king has an abundance of food and wealth, there are others like us who are suffering and longing for it. Why then isn't it being given away? Why throw it away without making use of it?"[23]
>
> That bowl-carrying beggar's mind became distracted. It wasn't possible for him to cultivate *prasāda* in his mind as he had before.[24]

When it then comes time for the Buddha to assign the reward from the offering, he assigns it in the name of King Prasenajit:

> In the case of a [king] with an army of
> elephants, horses, chariots, and foot soldiers
> who protects a city and its people—
> now you see the power offering even
> dry and bland rice gruel as alms.[25]

This assignment of the reward is peculiar. The king has presumably accrued more merit this time than the bowl-carrying beggar, for the king *did* feed the Buddha and the monastic community while the beggar *did not* cultivate *prasāda* in his mind. But no one offered "dry and bland rice gruel." Instead, the king had served a variety of fresh and fine foods. Ānanda, likewise, is puzzled, and so he remarks, "Many, many times, Bhadanta, the Blessed One has eaten at the home of King Prasenajit of Kośala and assigned the reward from an offering in someone's name. But I don't remember a reward ever being assigned like this before."[26]

In explanation, the Buddha recounts a story of King Prasenajit's former "karmic bonds" (*karmaploti*). In a previous life, the king was a householder's son. Orphaned at a young age and struggling to make ends meet, he takes a job guarding the field of a family friend. One day, the boy's mother brings him some bland rice gruel, but before the boy can eat it, he sees a solitary buddha who "instills *prasāda* through his body and instills *prasāda* through his mind."[27] Then, "with intense *prasāda*, he offers the bland rice gruel to the solitary buddha."[28] The Buddha then explains,

> That poor man was none other than King Prasenajit of Kośala at that time and at that juncture. Since he offered some bland rice gruel to that solitary buddha as alms, because of that karma, six times he will have kingship, lordship, and dominion among the Trāyastriṃśa gods, and six times, right here in Śrāvastī, he will be a *kṣatriya* king who has been duly consecrated. And because of that karma which remains, he has now become a *kṣatriya* king who has been duly consecrated. His offering of alms has come to fruition.[29]

"It is with reference to this," the Buddha continues, "that I say . . ."[30] and then he repeats the verse that he first used to assign the reward in the name of King Prasenajit. As Ānanda rightly observes, this verse isn't a conventional assignment of the reward, for no mention is made of the king's receiving any reward from the offering that he has just made. No mention is made of any reward at all. Instead, the Buddha takes this opportunity to describe the offering that Prasenajit made in a previous life that resulted in his becoming a king in this one. That offering follows the familiar typology: a poor person sees an object that instills *prasāda*, and with the arising of *prasāda* makes a meager offering.

While King Prasenajit's offering to the Buddha is not without its virtues, the Buddha's account of King Prasenajit's former karmic bonds and his assignation of merit to the king single out those offerings that are made within the typology of *prasāda* as being most efficacious. This typology of giving contrasts with the model of giving put forth in the previously cited *Dānādhikaraṇa-mahāyānasūtra*.

Instead of a simple correspondence in giving—as in, one who makes such-and-such an offering will experience such-and-such as a result—here there is no obvious correspondence between material offering and karmic result. Moreover, a king, in addition to Śakra, is shown to fail at the practice of giving as a means of earning merit.

The fourth part of the narrative begins as word quickly spreads that the Buddha has revealed the former karmic bonds of King Prasenajit and how his path to kingship began with a small offering of bland rice gruel. Though the king seems not to have accrued any reward from his latest offering, he nevertheless decides to make an even more extravagant one. He provides the Buddha and the monastic community with all the necessary provisions for the three months of the rainy season; he gives them foods with a hundred different flavors and enough clothes so that "each and every monk is provided with hundreds and thousands of garments";[31] and he collects a million jars of oil so that there can be an offering of "oil-lamp trees."[32]

Meanwhile, a certain woman who is dependent on the city for alms and is "suffering greatly"[33] hears that the king has offered food and clothes to the monastic community and is getting ready to perform a ceremony with oil-lamp trees. And so, she thinks,

> This King Prasenajit of Kośala isn't satisfied with his merit, so he still makes offerings and performs meritorious deeds. I really should collect [oil] from someplace so that I can offer a lamp to the Blessed One as well.[34]

She then begs a little bit of oil, and uses it to light a lamp that she has placed where the Buddha will do his walking meditation. Thereafter, she makes this fervent aspiration:

> By this root of virtue, just as the Lord Śākyamuni arose in the world, when people lived for one hundred years, as a teacher named Śākyamuni; likewise, may I too, when people live for one hundred years, be a teacher, that very Śākyamuni. As that excellent pair, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, were his first pair of disciples, the monk Ānanda his personal attendant, Śuddhodana his father, Mahāmāyā his mother, Kapilavastu his city, and Prince Rāhulabhadra his son; likewise, may the excellent pair, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, also be my first pair of disciples, the monk Ānanda my personal attendant, Śuddhodana my father, Mahāmāyā my mother, Kapilavastu my city, and Prince Rāhulabhadra my son. And as the Blessed One will pass into final nirvāṇa and his relics be

> distributed; likewise, may I too pass into final nirvāṇa and may my relics be distributed.[35]

Later in the evening, Ānanda notices that the lamp that the woman has offered is still lit. Since it is "impossible and inconceivable that lord buddhas would go to sleep in the light,"[36] Ānanda tries to put out the lamp, but he isn't able to do so. The Buddha then explains to him,

> Ānanda, you'll just exhaust yourself. Even if gale-force winds were to blow, they wouldn't be able to put it out, much less the movement of a hand, the edge of a robe, or a fan. This is so precisely because this lamp was lit by that woman with a great resolution of mind.[37]

The Buddha then repeats the particulars of the woman's fervent aspiration, and explains that they will come true.

Like the bowl-carrying beggar who recognized the impropriety of King Prasenajit making more offerings and earning even more merit, the woman who is dependent on the city for alms also wonders why the king isn't satisfied with his merit. Yet, unlike that bowl-carrying beggar, she doesn't then cultivate *prasāda*. She only has this thought and then decides that she too should make an offering. After begging her way to some oil, she offers a lamp to the Buddha and makes a fervent aspiration—that is, she uses the root of virtue constituted by her offering so that her aspiration will be fulfilled.

Instead of cultivating *prasāda*, the woman who is dependent on the city for alms cultivates "a great resolution of mind"[38] which, like *prasāda*, also produces amazing results. In the *Prātihārya-sūtra*, for example, the Buddha, "with a resolute [mind]"[39] puts his foot down on the ground, and as a result the whole world system begins to shake. Without getting into the particularities of this mental state and whether it offers another rubric for action, suffice it to say that its use here reaffirms the notion that certain paradigms of seeing and giving are particularly efficacious for the poor. This is not to say that rich people can not or should not make offerings, for such a prohibition would constitute economic suicide for the monastic community, but that within certain practices, money is not a viable currency for karmic development. This, the text seems to be saying, can be a difficult lesson for kings, and perhaps for the wealthy and fortunate in general.

Testifying to the power of this woman's offering is the quite literally unbelievable reward that she will receive as a result. She will be Śākyamuni Buddha himself. Regardless of whether this means that she will be a future Śākyamuni Buddha who is seemingly identical to his predecessor or, more ontologically troubling, the very Śākyamuni Buddha to whom she has just made an offering,

the prediction has an unmistakable force. Even a poor woman—a doubly bereft karmic position[40]—who focuses her mind in the right way and then makes an offering toward an appropriate field of merit can achieve the highest results, even becoming a buddha.

As a testament as well to Mahākāśyapa's assertion that offerings should be made by "those beings who suffer," here it is precisely such a being who is "suffering greatly" that is shown to benefit from making an offering. Within the social logic of giving presented here, proper donors are not simply poor or unfortunate, but those whose meager stock of merit leaves them suffering. When Śakra and King Prasenajit hear of the great results that the leprous woman received from her offering, they try to make offerings as well, but to no avail. Śakra is physically prevented from doing so, and King Prasenajit is allowed to do so but is assigned no merit from the deed. King Prasenajit nevertheless make an even more elaborate offering, yet here as well no mention is made of any merit being assigned. They are not proper donors. They are not suffering from a lack of merit.

King Prasenajit's second offering, however, is more than just an exercise in futility; it is also a marker of his greed. When the woman who is dependent on the city for alms observes that King Prasenajit isn't satisfied with his merit, it is this observation that constitutes—or, perhaps, leads to—a resolution of mind valuable enough that she can have full purchase on future buddhahood. Perhaps her observation functions something like a declaration of truth, much in the same way that the principal trusts became powerful performatives for Ānanda.

In other words, there is something wrong about the king—someone successful, someone appointed in the results of previous good deeds—making offerings out of a desire for more merit. It runs contrary to the "law of nature" (*dharmatā*). The king, like Śakra before him, can't cultivate *prasāda* or properly focus his mind, so he can't advance within the karmic system. His status, perhaps even his social status, has prevented him from experiencing *prasāda*, making efficacious offerings, and moving beyond his position in life.

What Is It that Kings Practice?

What then is a king supposed to do? If kings aren't supposed to give or if they don't earn merit from giving, what kind of Buddhist practice should they cultivate? Although King Prasenajit makes an offering of a week's worth of meals and then an even larger offering of three month's worth of monastic requisites, he doesn't seem to earn any merit from these deeds. One could imagine

the character of King Prasenajit becoming increasingly rattled as the destitute around him make meager offerings and are told of their great rewards to come, while his offerings yield no results.

This inefficacy, this apparent futility of royal giving within the *prasāda* paradigm, might help explain the feverish intensity with which many kings are represented as making offerings. Much in the same way that the Buddha and other *asecanakadarśana* objects are something that one can't get enough of seeing, giving is something that kings can't get enough of doing. King Aśoka's frenzy of giving at the end of his life offers a good example of this.

In the *Aśoka-avadāna*, after King Aśoka "has found *śraddhā* in the teachings of the Blessed One," he asks the monks "who it was that gave the most extensive gift to the Blessed One's order."[41] They explain that it was the householder Anāthapiṇḍada, who gave a gift of ten billion gold pieces. In response Aśoka declares, "I too will make a gift of ten billion [gold pieces] to the Blessed One's order."[42]

Aśoka then embarks on a spree of donations to the Buddha and the monastic community. He gives one hundred thousand gold pieces to each of the eighty-four thousand stūpas that he had previously built; he puts on a quinquennial festival during which he spends four hundred thousand gold pieces and feeds three hundred thousand monks;[43] and he presents the monastic community with the great earth (except for his treasury), and with his harem, his cabinet of ministers, his own person, and his son Kunāla, all of which he then redeems for four hundred thousand gold pieces. At this point, Aśoka falls ill. Though 96 percent of the way to his goal of giving ten billion gold pieces to the Blessed One's order, his offering is not complete. As he laments, "This intention of mine has not been fulfilled."[44]

Still intent, nevertheless, on completing his offering, he continues to the Kukkuṭārāma monastery, but then the heir apparent, his grandson Sampadin, issues an order prohibiting his access to state funds. Now penniless and powerless, he offers what little else remains: the gold plates on which his food is served, and then when those are taken away, the silver plates that are used in their place, and when those are taken away, the copper plates that are used instead. Soon, however, these too are taken away. Forced to eat off plates of clay, he is now destitute. All he has left is half of a myrobalan fruit.

Aśoka then has that myrobalan given to the monastic community on his behalf. With that done, he then presents the entire earth (except for the state treasury) to the community of the Blessed One's disciples. As he explains,

> With this gift, I seek neither Indra's abode
> nor reward in the Brahmā World,

let alone royal glory,
which is unsteady like a tidal current.

Instead, since I honored it with *bhakti*,
as the result of this gift may I attain
something that cannot be taken away,
which is honored by the noble
and which is safe from change—
sovereignty over the mind.[45]

Aśoka then dies. Although Aśoka has completed his goal of offering ten billion gold pieces to the Blessed One's order, no mention is made of whether his vow has come true or will do so in the future. As in the case of King Prasenajit, it may be that this offering, however extensive, does not produce the desired results of the donor.

It is unclear, however, whether this last offering should be evaluated within the *prasāda* paradigm, for Aśoka makes the offering not with *prasāda*, but with *bhakti*. One explanation might be that Aśoka generates *bhakti* because as a king he can't cultivate *prasāda*, and his offering goes unrewarded because *bhakti*, as I discussed in chapter 2, is generally ineffectual when coupled with an aspiration. Then again, Aśoka's frenzy of giving might be explained within the rubric of *prasāda* as a panicked reaction to his inability to cultivate *prasāda*, an interpretation that might also explain King Prasenajit's decision to offer three month's worth of requisites to the monastic community.

Yet such interpretations are only tentative, for there are significant peculiarities in the Aśoka cycle of stories regarding *prasāda, śraddhā,* and *bhakti*. While there are examples in the Aśoka stories of the normative use of these terms,[46] there are also quite a few instances when these terms are used unconventionally.[47] Even the standard tropes regarding *prasāda* are absent.[48] I suspect that the Aśoka stories were written at a different time, or by different authors, or for a different audience than the other stories in the *Divyāvadāna*. This isn't to claim that the remaining stories in the text are fully homogeneous in terms of tropes, but the Aśoka stories do seem to function within a different framework.

Regardless of the distinctiveness of the Aśoka stories, the logic of giving that kings tend to follow in the *Divyāvadāna* still falls somewhat outside of the *prasāda* paradigm.[49] Most notably, kings have a fixation on giving and the benefits it yields which contrasts with the less premeditated giving that occurs when one offers *prasāda*-initiated gifts. In the *Candraprabhabodhisattvacaryā-avadāna*, for example, King Candraprabha, much like King Aśoka, is extremely intent on giving. As the text explains, he is "a bodhisattva who gives away everything, who abandons

everything, and who does so without attachment."[50] The brahman Raudrakṣa then hears that "there is a king named Candraprabha who has vowed to himself to give away everything,"[51] so he goes to the king and asks him for his head. Since King Candraprabha "desires to make a sacrifice that will be greatly distinguished as the best of sacrifices,"[52] he says to him, "Brahman, freely and without interference, you may take this head of mine—it is my best limb."[53] In what follows, King Candraprabha uses the offering of his head so that he can make a declaration of truth for the attainment of unsurpassed perfect awakening.[54]

In Reiko Ohnuma's (2007: 91) work on "gift of the body" (*dehadāna*) stories, she describes how such offerings of the body, including King Candraprabha's self-sacrifice, were often conceived as "the paradigmatic example or fullest embodiment of *dāna-pāramitā* (the 'perfection of generosity')." As Ohnuma (2007: 170) explains, "gifts of the body constitute a fulfillment of *dāna-pāramitā* precisely because of the great purity of intention that is assumed to accompany such gifts." It is purity of intention above all that characterizes the gift of the body as an ideal form of gift.

This model of giving offers a stark contrast to the *prasāda* model. A gift of the body necessitates a great purity of intention on the part of the donor. Yet, within the *prasāda* paradigm, as I described in the *Sahasodgata-avadāna*, the intentionality of the donor is effectively erased by the natural exigencies of *prasāda* once it has arisen. This isn't to say, though, that donors within the *prasāda* paradigm don't have larger designs regarding the uses of giving. In certain cases, such donors make use of the roots of virtue that their offerings constitute and make fervent aspirations for rewards in the future, such as rebirth "in a family that is rich, wealthy, and prosperous." These larger designs, however, don't interfere with the mechanics of *prasāda*.

Perhaps a distinction should be made between the intention with which one performs an action, and the intention that one has for the functionality of the action performed. In other words, there is a distinction between the intention to perform an act and the intention to achieve that act's effect. The former might be called "acting with intention"; the latter, "acting with purpose."[55] Successful instances of giving within the *prasāda* paradigm might be considered "acting with intention," even though that intention is often all but eclipsed. What is missing on those occasions, however, is some ulterior motive for making an offering, such as karmic distinction or financial security in the future. Unsuccessful instances of giving within the *prasāda* paradigm might be considered "acting with purpose," for on those occasions donors act with the purpose of their own future reward.[56]

In the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna*, for example, Śakra gives divine ambrosia to Mahākāśyapa, and King Prasenajit offers food and requisites to the monastic

community, not because they want to feed those respective recipients, but because they have heard of the great rewards a leprous woman has received from offering rice water to Mahākāśyapa. They too want to enjoy such benefits. Such a dichotomy creates a necessary or forced naiveté on the part of those donors "acting with intention" such that they make their offerings with no thought of the effects that their offerings will have. Later in the story, after both Śakra and King Prasenajit have made their offerings and have had their high hopes for some beneficial results dashed, a suffering woman dependent on the city for alms makes a more meritorious offering of an oil lamp. Yet her offering isn't inspired by the leprous woman's offering, but by King Prasenajit's folly: he "isn't satisfied with his merit so he still makes offerings and performs meritorious deeds." Hence, she makes her offering with no apparent ulterior motive.

Elsewhere, however, in what constitutes a compelling rejoinder to the *prasāda* paradigm, kings are shown to benefit greatly from "acting with purpose." In the *Maitreya-avadāna*, in yet another instance of the kingly desire for superlatives and excess, King Dhanasammata becomes furious when he hears that King Vāsava rules a kingdom as prosperous and fortunate as his own, so he challenges the latter to battle. With both sides lined up for a war, however, King Dhanasammata discovers that a buddha, the perfectly awakened Ratnaśikhin, lives within King Vāsava's realm. Realizing that he has no hope of winning a battle against someone who has a buddha on his side, King Dhanasammata decides to sue for peace. He then sends an envoy to King Vāsava, and mutual goodwill is affirmed.

With peace assured, King Vāsava then approaches the perfectly awakened Ratnaśikhin and asks him, "Bhadanta, at whose feet do all kings fall prostrate?"

"At those of a *cakravartin* king, your majesty,"[57] the perfectly awakened Ratnaśikhin replies.

With that said, King Vāsava invites Ratnaśikhin Buddha and the community of monks over to his house for a meal on the following day. When that time comes, King Vāsava feeds Ratnaśikhin with his own hands and then falls prostrate at his feet and makes a fervent aspiration:

> "Bhadanta, by this root of virtue may I be a *cakravartin* king."
>
> Immediately a conch sounded.
>
> The perfectly awakened Ratnaśikhin then said this to King Vāsava: "Your majesty, when people live for eighty thousand years, you will be a *cakravartin* king named Śaṅkha (Conch)."[58]

When King Dhanasammata hears of this prediction, he too approaches the perfectly awakened Ratnaśikhin and asks him, "Bhadanta, at whose feet do all *cakravartin* kings fall prostrate?"

"At those of a perfectly awakened tathāgata arhat, your majesty,"[59] the perfectly awakened Ratnaśikhin replies.

King Dhanasammata then invites Ratnaśikhin Buddha and the community of monks over to his house for a meal on the following day. He too feeds Ratnaśikhin with his own hands and then falls prostrate at his feet and makes a fervent aspiration:

> "By this root of virtue may I be a teacher in the world, a perfectly awakened tathāgata arhat."
>
> "Your majesty," the perfectly awakened Ratnaśikhin said, "when people live for eighty thousand years, you will be a perfectly awakened tathāgata arhat named Maitreya."[60]

In the story, King Dhanasammata isn't a particularly virtuous character. He sets out to attack King Vāsava because the latter rules a kingdom as prosperous as his own and is only deterred because he knows he can't win. He offers food to Ratnaśikhin Buddha not with a noble purpose but with the ulterior motive of forcing King Vāsava, in a future rebirth, at the zenith of his power, to fall prostrate at his feet. Yet his offering—even without *prasāda*, even without a noble purpose—constitutes a sufficient root of virtue for him to successfully make a fervent aspiration to be the future Buddha Maitreya, the next buddha to appear in this world. Clearly more work needs to be done on the logic of kingly giving, for it runs counter to the logic of *prasāda*, and yet both systems are well represented in the *Divyāvadāna*.

Prasāda as Praxis: Monks

Like the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna*, the *Cakravartivyākṛta-avadāna* also makes normative claims about the experience of *prasāda*, but unlike the former, it concerns itself with the appropriateness of the practice for monks. In the story, a monk (1) prostrates himself before a stūpa containing some of the Buddha's hair and nails,[61] and then (2) "bringing to mind the Tathāgata in his form, [3] cultivates *prasāda* in his mind as he thinks,

> The Blessed One is just like this—a tathāgata, an arhat, a perfectly awakened being, perfect in knowledge and action, a sugata, a knower of the world, an unsurpassed guide for those in need of training, a teacher of gods and mortals, a buddha, and a blessed one."[62]

Meanwhile, the Buddha observes that monk engaging in what the text describes as the first and third of these practices, and thereafter he enjoins the

other monks to look at that monk and observe the same: "Monks, look at this monk who prostrates himself with his entire body at this stūpa for hair and nails and cultivates *prasāda* in his mind."[63] Then he explains to them,

> As many grains of sand as there are in that space between the land that this monk has tread upon and the stratum of the golden wheel,[64] which is eighty thousand leagues down below, this monk will enjoy that many thousands of reigns as a *cakravartin* king.[65]

Then it occurs to the monks that—

> "One cannot count the grains of sand in a pit that is a man's height in depth, what then of those in the eighty thousand leagues leading down to the stratum of the golden wheel? Who can pass so much time stuck in saṃsāra?" So from then on those monks never again made offerings to a stūpa for hair and nails.[66]

Unlike Śakra and King Prasenajit in the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna*, monks here are represented as cultivating *prasāda*, or at least being able to cultivate *prasāda*. As I mentioned previously, they engage with *prāsādika* objects more actively than the laity. The monk in this passage generates in his mind an image of the Buddha, making use of a standard tenfold list of characteristics,[67] and cultivates *prasāda*. He does for himself what "agents of *prasāda*" such as Mahākātyāyana and Mahākāśyapa do for others.

But what is at issue is whether such a practice leads to desirable results. For the suffering masses engaged in the karmic project of performing good deeds to accrue merit for a favorable rebirth, the experience of *prasāda* is very effective. It assures them a reward in the future. But for those monks who desire to transcend more quickly the repeating cycle of birth, death, and birth again, cultivating *prasāda* isn't very effective. The experience of *prasāda* produces good karma, and that good karma has great purchase within the realm of saṃsāra, but that same good karma also binds one within this realm. It is said that the lay donors in the *Brāhmaṇadārikā-avadāna* and the *Stutibrāhmaṇa-avadāna* will have to wait eons until they attain some form of awakening, and the monk in the *Cakravartivyākṛta-avadāna* will have to pass eons as a *cakravartin* king, with no mention even made of his future awakening. The impropriety of this practice for monks, who are supposed to be eager to escape saṃsāra, is apparent in this long karmic sentence. Since nirvāṇa is an extinguishing of karma, good karma as well as bad can get in the way. Hence, the monks stop their ritual activities at the stūpa.

Yet, there seems to be some ambiguity in the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna* as to precisely what practice or practices the single monk performs, the Buddha

describes, and the monastic community refrains from. At first, the text explains that the monk engages in three practices: (1) he prostrates himself before a stūpa containing some of the Buddha's hair and nails, (2) he performs *buddhānusmṛti* with regard to the Tathāgata's form, and (3) all the while he cultivates *prasāda* in his mind. When the Buddha sees the monk, he observes only that the monk engages in the first and third of these practices. No mention is made of him performing *buddhānusmṛti*. Likewise, when he enjoins the other monks to observe the lone monk, he again mentions only the first and third of these practices and leaves out *buddhānusmṛti*. When the monks hear this, they stop making offerings at the stūpa.

There appears to be some slippage about the practice in question here. For the Buddha, the practices of prostration, *buddhānusmṛti*, and *prasāda* seem to be subsumed into the former and the latter. When the monks hear of the results that these endeavors will produce, they stop making offerings at the stūpa, apparently believing that it is this practice that will mire them in saṃsāra. Yet, in the beginning of the story, it is explained that it is a "rule" or a "law of nature" (*dharmatā khalu*) that there are stūpas for the hair and nails of buddhas while they are alive, and that when buddhas are withdrawn for meditation, monks perform *pūjā*—unspecified ritual acts—at these stūpas. Then, the text explains, some monks go off for alms and others "experience the pleasures of meditation, liberation, and meditative concentration and absorption."[68] In other words, it is "natural" or "normal" or "to be expected" (*dharmatā*) that monks would perform *pūjā* at such stūpas and then engage in some meditative practice. The text here also uses the plural "buddhas" to indicate that this wasn't simply a passing phenomenon. This was and is the case under the dispensation of all buddhas.

Still, judging from the Buddha's prediction, the practice of *prasāda* must not have been one of the "normal" practices, for its results are certainly not "to be expected." Monks, presumably, want to escape from saṃsāra, but the practice of *prasāda* embeds them further in it. It is odd, though, that the Buddha makes no mention of *buddhānusmṛti*. Although claims have been made for the importance of the practice of *buddhānusmṛti* beginning in the early centuries of the Common Era (Harrison 1978), here the practice of *prasāda* seems to eclipse it. It is performed, but goes unnoticed and unmentioned, attesting once again to the importance the text ascribes to *prasāda*.[69]

Nevertheless, when the monks hear the Buddha's prediction, they don't stop the practices of prostration or *prasāda*. Instead, it is said that they stop making "offerings" (*kāra*) at the stūpa. But how is making offerings different from the accepted practice of performing *pūjā*, and what is the connection between

making offerings and the practices of prostration and *prasāda*? Regardless of the logic of the monks' decision, the Buddha neither directly champions nor condemns their choice to no longer make offerings at the stūpa. Rather, "knowing with his mind the thoughts of those monks,"[70] he is sympathetic to their desire not to be stuck in saṃsāra. As he explains,

> Saṃsāra, monks, is without beginning or end for those beings hindered by ignorance, fettered by desire, and bound by the chains of desire—they are reborn over and over again for a very long time. The beginning of suffering is not known.[71]

But how then are these monks to escape from saṃsāra?

The *Aśokavarṇa-avadāna* may offer some clues. In the story a bull sees the Buddha, and his mind is then filled with *prasāda*. The Buddha then foretells the bull's future:

> That bull, Ānanda, his mind filled with *prasāda* in the presence of the Tathāgata, will die after seven days and be reborn among the Cāturmahārājika gods, where he will be the son of the great king Vaiśravaṇa. Then, having passed away from there, he will be reborn among the Trāyastriṃśa gods as the son of Śakra, lord of the gods. Having passed away from there, he will be reborn among the Yāma gods as the son of Lord Yāma. Having passed away from there, he will be reborn among the Tuṣita gods as the son of Lord Tuṣita. Having passed away from there, he will be reborn among the Nirmāṇarati gods as the son of the divinely born Sunirmāṇarati (Greatly Delighting in Creation). Having passed away from there, he will be reborn among the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods as the son of the divinely born Vaśavartin (Master). Continuing like this, he will not suffer a karmic downfall for ninety-nine thousand eons. Then, having experienced divine pleasure among the gods in the sphere of desire, in his last life, his last existence, his last body, his last incarnation, he will take on human form. He will be the king named Aśokavarṇa (Praised as Griefless), a *cakravartin*, a conqueror of the four corners of the earth, a just and virtuous ruler possessing the seven treasures . . . At that time he will make offerings, renounce his *cakravartin* kingship, shave off his hair and beard, put on red clothes, and with perfect *śraddhā*, go forth from home to homelessness. Then he will directly experience awakening as a solitary buddha and become the solitary buddha named Aśokavarṇa.[72]

At the end of the story, the Buddha explains that while it is good to cultivate *prasāda*, it is even better to then make a fervent aspiration. But this is not exactly what he tells Ānanda to put into practice. As the Buddha explains:

> But now since his mind is filled with *prasāda* in my presence, as a result of that action, he will experience divine-like pleasure and attain awakening as a solitary buddha. And so it is, Ānanda, that having *prasāda* in mind toward tathāgatas produces results that can't even be imagined. What to say of making a fervent aspiration? So then, Ānanda, this is to be learned: "Bit by bit, moment by moment, even for just a snap of the fingers, we should bring to mind the phenomenal form of the Tathāgata." It is this, Ānanda, that you should learn to do.[73]

As in the *Cakravartivyākṛta-avadāna*, here one who experiences *prasāda* achieves a reward that leads him or her to be stuck in saṃsāra for a very long time. In this case, the bull will be reborn in this cosmic realm again and again for ninety-nine thousand eons. While the experience of *prasāda* is karmically expedient, often culminating in awakening, it does engender many rebirths in saṃsāra. One can imagine the monks in the *Cakravartivyākṛta-avadāna* complaining that they didn't join the monastic community so that they could perform a practice that would lead them to cycle through birth after birth for eon after eon only *once again* to take rebirth as humans and go forth as monks. Why follow the path of the bull in the *Aśokavarṇa-avadāna* who will need to wait ninety-nine thousand eons to "go forth from home to homelessness," when they have already done so? The expectation was surely to engage in practices that would offer them a more immediate release.

This may explain why the Buddha doesn't surmise from the bull's example that Ānanda, who is a monk, should cultivate *prasāda*, but rather that he should perform *buddhānusmṛti* and "bring to mind the phenomenal form of the Tathāgata." While in the *Cakravartivyākṛta-avadāna* the practice of *buddhānusmṛti* was subsumed within the practice of *prasāda*, here the Buddha reverses that hierarchy.

One possible explanation for these erasures concerns the multiple provenance of these stories. Since it appears that these stories were meant to function for both lay and monastic audiences (Rotman 2008: 19–30), a certain overlap and slippage of ideas is be expected. Hence, even if it seems that the practice of *prasāda* was intended for impoverished laity and the practice of *buddhānusmṛti* for monks, a story regarding one of these practices might be followed by a conclusion about the other, and vice versa.

Although in the *Cakravartivyākṛta-avadāna* the monks respond to the Buddha's prediction by no longer making offerings at the stūpa, the issue at stake seems to be less about the external form of a religious practice (i.e., stūpa

veneration) than about the propriety of particular mental activities (i.e., *prasāda, buddhānusmṛti*). Such a distinction may provide a useful hermeneutic for engaging with the longstanding argument concerning the practice of stūpa worship and its relation to the rise of the Mahāyāna.[74] While I won't rehash the pleadings for or against such a connection, the *Cakravartivyākṛta-avadāna* seems to represent both sides of the argument, offering opposing views about the veneration of stūpas by monastics. As a rule, it is said, monks perform *pūjā* at stūpas for a buddha's hair and nails when a buddha is withdrawn for meditation, but it is with Gautama Buddha's consent that monks in his order stop making offerings at such stūpas because that practice (or, at least, particular practices that may accompany it) leads to undesirable results. Yet, the issue at stake in the *Divyāvadāna* isn't the outward practice of stūpa veneration but the internal practices that may go along with it. In other words, in the *Divyāvadāna* the practice of stūpa veneration is subsumed within the practices of *prasāda* and *buddhānusmṛti,* rendering the former practice an external shell for the latter ones.

One last point: While monks may not have been instructed to generate *prasāda* in themselves, there is evidence that they were instructed to generate it in others. In the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, Śāntideva's "compendium of training" from the ninth century that quotes passages from many Buddhist texts, including stories from the *Divyāvadāna*, monks are instructed to shun outside activities and develop a stable mind. The ability to focus on objects for as long as one desires, it is said, has many benefits. Furthermore, the text continues,

> Even at present [a bodhisattva with this ability] becomes capable of benefiting sentient beings because of his capacity to generate *prasāda*. How?
>
> Steadfast at all times,
> he gently speaks very kind words
> and thus wins over those people who are fortunate.
> And so, that which should be appropriated is produced.
>
> And this is the duty of a bodhisattva—namely, winning over sentient beings. Blessed One, as it is made clear by the bodhisattva, the noble Priyadarśana, in the noble *Dharmasaṃgīti-sūtra* ["The Sūtra of the Recitation of Dharma"], the bodhisattva should proceed in such a way that the moment he is seen, beings become possessed of *prasāda*. For what reason? Blessed One, a bodhisattva has no other duty than winning over sentient beings. It is this maturation of beings, Blessed One, that is [the goal of] the bodhisattva's recitation of the dharma.[75]

Here bodhisattvas are enjoined to function as *prāsādika* objects. Yet, unlike *prāsādika* objects described in the *Divyāvadāna,* bodhisattvas do not naturally generate *prasāda* in others. It is a skill that they must develop through mental concentration. In this iteration of the bodhisattva's practice, this skill is also crucial for accomplishing the oft-stated goal of the bodhisattva, that of benefiting sentient beings.[76]

The best way of "benefiting" sentient beings, according to the text, is "winning over" (*āvarjana*) sentient beings. In the above verse, the bodhisattva is said to accomplish this through "very kind words," but in what follows the bodhisattva is advised to proceed accordingly so that others will be won over by seeing him. This is how the miracles of solitary buddhas are often said to function in the *Divyāvadāna*. As I mentioned previously, it is often remarked in such instances that "magic quickly wins over the ordinary person."[77] Hence, "the recitation of dharma" that leads to "the maturation of beings" is not really a "recitation" (*saṃgīti*) at all. The duty is not to "collectively" or "properly" (*saṃ*) "recite" or "proclaim" (*gīti*) the dharma, but to convey it through visual means.

Considering that the above verse explains the production of *prasāda* in a way different from the description that follows it—that is, through verbal not visual means—perhaps this particular verse was quoted because of what it implies about the acquisition of *prasāda*. What is "produced" by the bodhisattva is *prasāda*, and this is what "should be appropriated" by the person who is "fortunate" or "suitable" (*bhavya*).[78] But this isn't just a matter of propriety. It is also an injunction. *Prasāda* is "worthy of being appropriated" or "worthy of being seized [by the mind]" (*ādeya;* Tib., *gzung bar 'os pa*), yet it is also something that should be done. In a sense, this is a counterpart to the argument I made previously that the Buddha is "worthy of being seen" and "should be seen" (*pradarśanīya*), and as it is said in the Pali, is "worthy of being used to generate *pasāda*" and "should be used to generate *pasāda*" (*pasādanīya*).

Intention, Compulsion, and Ethics

In summary, what is emphasized in the *Divyāvadāna* is that certain objects—such as buddhas, images of buddhas, arhats, stūpas, and sometimes solitary buddhas—whether directly labeled as such or not, are "agents of *prasāda*" (*prāsādika*), and when certain individuals, particularly the poor who lack in merit, see these objects, *prasāda* arises in them. This *prasāda,* in turn, generates a compulsion to give, for this is the "duty of one who has *prasāda*" (*prasannādhikāra*). The offerings that result from this duty of *prasāda* are objects

of little market value, yet they yield extraordinary results for the donor, such as future awakening.

There are a number of possible explanations to account for the connection in this process between *prasāda* and giving: most notably, the intention model and the karma model. In many ways, the intention model offers a compelling explanatory rubric: *prasāda* motivates an act of giving and then accompanies its performance. It is, in some sense, both cause and agent.[79] For example, in the *Brāhmaṇadārikā-avadāna*, after developing *prasāda*, a brahman's daughter offers barleymeal as alms to the Buddha "with intense *prasāda*,"[80] and in the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna*, a poor man likewise offers bland rice gruel to a solitary buddha "with intense *prasāda*."[81] This model, however, cannot explain those instances when *prasāda* arises in an individual and then he or she makes no offering, or when it is *prasāda* itself that is the cause of rewards to come, not some unspecified intention to make an offering that, for some reason, is never fulfilled.

The karma model also offers a possible explanation: the arising of *prasāda* in individuals results, seemingly naturally and inevitably, in those individuals making offerings. An act (i.e., producing the mental state of *prasāda*) yields as its result another act (i.e., giving). Yet, the karma system likewise has difficulty explaining those instances in which no offering is made. In this way, both the intention model and the karma model share limitations not only with each other but with the gift-exchange model of *prasāda* which also has difficulty explaining such instances when no *prasāda*-initiated counter-gift occurs.[82]

Consideration of the karma model, however, raises a heuristically useful point: if the act of giving is in some sense a result of the arising of *prasāda*, is this act of *prasāda*-initiated giving necessarily accompanied by an intention? In various philosophical materials, for example, it is said that acts of a buddha are without intention, volition, or effort, and in the absence of discursive thought. As Paul Griffiths (1995: 103) explains, such acts involve at least the following:

> first, the absence of any intentions or volitions (*cetanā, abhisaṃskāra*) on Buddha's part as causes of that action; second, following from the first, the absence of any effort (*yatna, ābhoga*) or deliberation involving constructive or analytical thought (*vikalpa*) informing or guiding the action; and third, as a corollary of the first and second points, the absence of any possibility of wrong action, or making mistakes.

While the rightness or wrongness of those offerings that result from *prasāda* is not in question here (for the efficaciousness of such offerings beggars the question of their truthfulness), the first and second of the above descriptions do accord with depictions of *prasāda*-initiated giving. Both the acts of a buddha

and the giving that results from *prasāda* are characterized by a spontaneity and effortlessness, characteristics that I will discuss more fully in chapter 6.[83]

Though the philosophical technicalities of the mechanics of karma, such as the relation of "volition" (*cetanā*) to mental states and bodily action, have been worked out in Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist sources and in recent scholarship on these materials,[84] what interests me is not a philosophical answer to this question. Recourse to either Theravādin or Vaibhāṣika works would yield different answers, regardless of the usefulness of applying philosophical paradigms to a corpus of stories.

With that said, my sense is that the silence or, at least, the indeterminacy regarding the intention with which individuals make *prasāda*-initiated offerings has important implications for the logic of giving. Even in those instances when an individual makes a *prasāda*-initiated offering "with intense *prasāda*," there is no indication that the individual is conscious that *prasāda* has arisen. Donors do not speak of forces, such as compassion or compunction, compelling them to give. The compulsion of *prasāda*, it seems, is *prasāda* itself. The donor need not feel some personal desire or inclination to make an offering but only an external impetus to do so—such is the mechanism of *prasāda*.

Arjun Appadurai's work on praise and emotion in Hindu India offers insight into some possible implications of this formulation. Appadurai (1990: 101) describes an instance of "coercive subordination" in which beggars bless and praise their (potential) benefactors "to trap them in the cultural implications of their roles as superiors, that is, in the obligation to be generous."[85] Here Buddhist orthopraxy seems to be doing much the same; it traps individuals into giving. It provides the naturalized and necessary logic for what Bourdieu refers to as "bodily hexis."[86] Individuals who come and see *prasāda*-generating objects are compelled to make offerings. Not doing so would be tantamount to admitting that *prasāda* has not arisen in one. And if *prasāda* has not arisen in one, then presumably one has not accrued the vast amounts of merit such objects are capable of generating. Then again, even if an individual were to be conscious of his or her mental state at the time of *prasāda*-initiated giving, and even if that mental state were to be instrumental in the act of giving, the mental referent of *prasāda* seems to be sufficiently vague—"joy" or "satisfaction,"[87] "faith" or "tranquility"[88]—to allow for the easy assumption that *prasāda* had, indeed, arisen.

This formulation raises an intriguing parallel with an extremely popular contemporary practice in South Asia involving seeing, giving, and *prasāda*. Typically, one has *darśana* of a person or object; makes an offering to him, her, or it; and then in return receives what in Hindi is known as *prasād*—a substance (generally food) that has been empowered by that recipient of devotion. Icons

such as Śiva *liṅga*s, statues, and chromolithographs function as the empowering objects, and though they are not referred to as *prāsādika*, they do cause the mundane substances offered to them to be transformed into *prasād*. Furthermore, in the case at least of modern Hinduism, there are elaborate social and cultural structures to insure that after the devotee has *darśana* of a person or object, he or she makes an offering on behalf of that person or object.[89] In other words, after having *darśana*, the donor-cum-viewer is compelled by an outside force to give.

An outside force likewise compels the giving that results from *prasāda*. To reiterate: the arising of *prasāda* is represented as having less to do with an individual's personal efforts than with the force exerted by *prāsādika* objects. As "agents of *prasāda*" it is they, and not the individual, that are the primary cause of the arising of *prasāda*. Similarly, the agency involved in making a *prasāda*-initiated offering has less to do with an individual's personal efforts than with the force that *prasāda* exerts once it has arisen. The inclination to give seems to reside in *prasāda* itself and to be naturally produced by it.

It is precisely this outside agency of *prasāda*-initiated giving that renders the practice so effective. Within the rigid fatalism of cause and effect that is so conspicuous in the *Divyāvadāna*, only a karmic intrusion can divert one from one's karmic destiny.[90] Unlike the notion in Japanese martial arts that one can act with "no mind" or with an absence of volition,[91] the giving that results from *prasāda* isn't merely an action performed with minimal personal agency. It is also an action generated by an outside force. Agents of *prasāda* are not simply objects that others engage with, but objects that dictate the terms of engagement and the outcome of that engagement. In other words, within the textual world of the *Divyāvadāna*, a certain class of actions are propelled not by the individual practitioner, nor by a monastic code or a litany of lay precepts, but by *prāsādika* objects themselves and the *prasāda* that they generate. What is needed, then, is an anthropology of the icon to study the system of action that these objects engender.[92] I will come back to this idea in the chapters that follow.

This formulation of agency raises some intriguing questions for Buddhist ethics and practice. Instead of placing the burden on the individual to cultivate right thoughts and to perform proper actions, as is generally thought to be the case in Buddhist ethics (e.g., Saddhatissa 1970: 87–112), the *Divyāvadāna* presents individuals as being able to proceed from seeing to giving and then on to a reward in the future with a bare minimum of personal effort and mental conditioning.[93] They are, in a sense, passive performers who are acted upon through the forces of *prasāda:* first by *prāsādika* objects and then by the giving that *prasāda* entails. It is sufficient merely to enter the presence of a *prāsādika* object, see it, and then make an offering.

This mechanism of *prasāda* affects the very fundamentals of Buddhist ethics. For example, from the very outset of the Buddhist-Hybrid-Sanskrit *Dharmapada*, it is explained that an individual's mental state when performing an action is of paramount importance in determining his or her resultant condition. But from the perspective of the *Divyāvadāna*, the first two verses of the *Dharmapada* are a call not to meditate or to do good deeds for a neighbor, but to go and see an object that causes *prasāda* and then make an offering. As they exhort,

. . . If, with a polluted mind, one speaks or acts,
then suffering follows as a wheel the draught ox's foot.
. . . If, with a mind possessed of *prasāda*, one speaks or acts,
then happiness follows as a shadow that never departs.[94]

Perhaps in the early centuries of the Common Era these verses were intended as a call to go on pilgrimage to where *prāsādika* objects could be found so that one's mind could be transformed from one that is "polluted" (*praduṣṭa*) into one "possessed of *prasāda*" (*prasanna*). Then happiness would follow, not to mention great karmic rewards in the future. With the establishment of many new monasteries in the first centuries of the Common Era, most of them situated just outside of urban centers along trade routes and hence easily accessible (Heitzman 1984), there very well may have been a concerted effort among the monastic community to encourage pilgrimage to these sites as well as donations.

But the practice of *prasāda* cannot be explained away by financial considerations. Most of those in whom *prasāda* arises have little disposable income, and the *prasāda*-initiated offerings they make have little market value. Still, the venerable Mahākātyāyana explains in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* that "perfectly awakened tathāgata arhats are certainly to be seen and certainly to be offered respect,"[95] and the same appears to have been true for other *prāsādika* objects as well. I return to this connection between pilgrimage and *prāsādika* objects in the chapters that follow.

5

Proximity and Presence

But there is a better part of me. A part that craves contact, that craves immersion. That part in all of us wants more than lunch breaks by the creek. That part wants to toss sandwiches aside and dive in, feeling an almost religious need to be immersed in something larger. And here, by the water, we don't just suspect that there is something larger. We know it.

—David Gessner, *Under the Devil's Thumb*

Although the practice of *prasāda* is rarely discussed directly in Buddhist materials, the numerous traces of this practice that are found in the *Divyāvadāna* may offer some clues about the ritual activities of those individuals in the past whose deeds and offerings were insufficient to have been enshrined in inscriptions. As I've mentioned, the practice of *prasāda* seems to have been aimed at the downtrodden, those suffering from a dearth of merit. It probably wasn't intended for those with sufficient financial resources to make donations worthy of being recorded or those capable of overseas exploits, which are such a staple in Indian narrative literature. But how can such a subaltern history be formulated with such a paucity of material, with nothing more than some narrative threads in a series of didactic stories? The task is difficult, but at least the narrative threads are numerous.

In the previous chapter I examined a particular typology of *prasāda*, describing both the practice and practitioners. In what follows I want to elaborate on the mechanics of *prasāda*, first by looking

closely at a story that narrativizes the practice of *prasāda* and then by thinking more broadly about the social and political implications of this material. I will begin with a close analysis of the Toyikā story, commenting on the importance of proximity, presence, and ritual action in generating *prasāda*.[1]

Proximity and Ritual Action

In the *Indrabrāhmaṇa-avadāna* and then again in the *Toyikāmaha-avadāna*,[2] a story is told about a place called Toyikā that concerns the practice of *prasāda*. Though tropes are repeated in the *Divyāvadāna*, this is the only story that occurs twice, and the only one that narrativizes and contextualizes the mechanics of *prasāda* both for when a buddha is alive and for when no buddha is in living-and-breathing presence.

The story begins with the Buddha and Ānanda going to Toyikā. There a brahman plowing in the fields sees the Buddha—

> who is adorned with the thirty-two marks of a great man,
> whose body is radiant with the eighty minor marks,
> who is adorned with a halo extending an arm's length,
> whose brilliance is greater than a thousand suns,
> and who, like a mountain of jewels that moves,
> is beautiful from every side.[3]

Then he reflects,

> "If I go to Lord Gautama and pay my respects, my work will suffer. If I don't go to him and pay my respects, my merit will suffer. Isn't there any skillful way wherein neither my work nor my merit will suffer?" Then this thought occurred to him: "I will pay my respects standing right here. This way neither my work nor my merit will suffer." Standing right there and still holding his goad-post, he paid his respects: "I pay my respects to Lord Buddha!"[4]

The Buddha then explains to Ānanda,

> This brahman has a [great] opportunity to put an end to worldly existence. If he only had the proper experience, knowledge, and insight, [it would have occurred to him] that in this place lies the undisturbed skeleton of the perfectly awakened Kāśyapa. Hence, he could have venerated me and, in this way, have venerated two perfectly awakened buddhas. How is that? In this place, Ānanda, lies the undisturbed skeleton of the perfectly awakened Kāśyapa.[5]

The "skillful way" (*upāya*) that the brahman devises to venerate the Buddha and not stray from his work is not skillful enough, however. The Buddha does not consider the rite that the brahman performs successful. The brahman "pays his respects" or "respectfully greets" (*abhivādanaṃ √kṛ*) the Buddha from beside his plow, yet the Buddha tells Ānanda that the brahman has missed a "[great] opportunity to put an end to worldly existence." If the brahman had "the proper experience, knowledge, and insight," he would have known to come closer and *venerate* both Gautama Buddha and Kāśyapa Buddha.

In the version of the story preserved in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*, the problem is glossed even more clearly as one of proximity. As the Buddha explains,

> Ānanda, this brahman has made a mistake. Had he approached and respectfully greeted me in this place, then he could have looked and come to know for himself that in this place lies the undisturbed skeleton of the perfectly awakened Kāśyapa. Having approached, he could have venerated me. Hence, he could have venerated two perfectly awakened buddhas. How is that? In this place, Ānanda, lies the undisturbed skeleton of the perfectly awakened Kāśyapa.[6]

It is being in the presence of the object of veneration that allows for a skillful way of practice. In this case, ritual action from a distance is a mistake.

Ritual Action: How and Where

In the above portion of the Toyikā story, two forms of ritual action are differentiated—that of "respectfully greeting" (*abhivādana*) and "venerating" (*vandana*). The act of "respectfully greeting" does not occur frequently in the *Divyāvadāna*, nor is it described in detail, but it is elaborated upon in texts such as the *Manusmṛti*.[7] V. S. Apte (PSED, s.v. *abhivādana*) explains the practice as a form of "salutation of a superior or elder by an inferior or junior, or of a teacher by his disciple. It consists in (1) rising from one's seat (*pratyutthāna*); (2) clasping the feet (*pādopasaṃgraha*), and (3) repeating the form of salutation (*abhivāda*) which includes the name of title of the person addressed, followed by the mention of the person's own name." In the Toyikā story, however, the act of "respectfully greeting" is done at a distance, too far away for "clasping the feet." As a practice in the *Divyāvadāna*, it is distinguished only by its relative lack of efficacy. By "respectfully greeting" the Buddha, the brahman has not "put an end to worldly existence." The process of "venerating" is also not defined in the *Divyāvadāna*, but it does occur frequently in a stereotyped trope

of what one does upon meeting the Buddha—one "venerates with one's head the feet of the Blessed One."[8] This act does require physical proximity and also a touching of the feet. And it is this act that has great karmic efficacy.

Ritual action from a distance, however, is not always problematic. In the *Pūrṇa-avadāna*, Vakkalin sees the Buddha "from a distance,"[9] from the top of a mountain, and still, as soon as he sees him, his mind becomes filled with *prasāda*. In the Toyikā story, the brahman's first sight of the Buddha is instead accompanied only by a stereotyped description of the Buddha's wondrous physical form. Elsewhere, as in the *Aśokavarṇa-avadāna*[10] and even in an earlier incident in the *Toyikāmaha-avadāna* itself,[11] when a character sees the Buddha and then this description occurs, *prasāda* immediately arises in that character. Here, however, the trope is diverted. Visual contact is presented as insufficient. Closer contact is needed.

Though the standard trope of seeing the Buddha and immediately developing *prasāda* is here curtailed, the practice of *prasāda* is not abandoned. It is only reworked. As will become clear in what follows in the story, what is at stake here is the utility of certain objects for ritual practice, the means by which they can be utilized, and the mapping out of karmically potent Buddhist space.

We return now to the story. In response to the Buddha's pronouncement that the brahman has missed a chance to venerate two buddhas, Ānanda springs into action:

> The venerable Ānanda very quickly folded his upper garment into four as a seat and then said this to the Blessed One: "May the Blessed One please sit down on this seat that I have specially prepared. In this way this piece of earth will have be made use of by two perfectly awakened buddhas—previously by the perfectly awakened Kāśyapa and at present by the Blessed One."[12]

The Buddha does so, and then asks the monks if they would like to see "the undisturbed assemblage of remains of the perfectly awakened Kāśyapa."[13] They assent and remark that "at the sight of it, monks can cultivate *prasāda* in their minds."[14] Some nāgas then raise the perfectly awakened Kāśyapa's undisturbed remains. Thereafter, the Buddha tells the monks to grasp its appearance, and then it disappears.

Meanwhile, King Prasenajit hears that the Blessed One has raised up the undisturbed remains of the perfectly awakened Kāśyapa,[15] so he and a host of others set out to see of it. But it disappears before they arrive. The people "feel miserable and dejected"[16] and wonder whether their coming there has been in vain. A lay disciple of the Buddha then begins to circumambulate the place where the perfectly awakened Kāśyapa's remains had been.

And with his mind, he formed this thought: "How much merit will I get from respectfully walking around [this place]?"

Then the Blessed One, knowing with his mind the thoughts of that lay disciple and that large crowd of people, uttered this verse so that they wouldn't have any regrets:

Hundreds of thousands of gold coins or nuggets
are not equal to the wise man, *prasāda* in mind,
who walks around shrines of a buddha.

One of the lay disciples then offered a lump of clay at this place, and thus formed this thought: "Elsewhere the Blessed One has explained how much merit is earned from respectfully walking around [shrines of a buddha]. But how much merit will there be from [offering] a lump of clay?"

Then the Blessed One, knowing with his mind his thoughts as well, uttered this verse:

Hundreds of thousands of gold coins or nuggets
are not equal to one, *prasāda* in mind,
who places a single lump of clay
at a shrine of a buddha.[17]

The story continues with this style of exposition as the Buddha explains that hundreds of thousands of golden objects are not equal

to one, *prasāda* in mind, who places heaps of pearls and lovely flowers at shrines of a buddha
. . . to the wise man, *prasāda* in mind, who festoons with garlands shrines of a buddha
. . . to the wise man, *prasāda* in mind, who makes a gift of oil lamps at shrines of a buddha
. . . to the wise man, *prasāda* in mind, who sprinkles perfume at shrines of a buddha[18]

and so on.

Here the discourse on *prasāda* is less about when the mental state of *prasāda* arises than where the practice of *prasāda* should be performed. In the common trope, an individual sees the Buddha, *prasāda* arises in him, and he makes an offering; the location is incidental. These events occur wherever one happens to see the Buddha, which is frequently in an unidentified place in a town that the Buddha has recently entered for alms.[19] But here the location of the practice of *prasāda* is anything but incidental.

In the above passage and in the one that precedes it, three forms of effective ritual action are mentioned—"veneration" (*vandana*), "seeing" (*darśana*), and the practice of *prasāda*—and each is shown to require the practitioner to make a pilgrimage in order to perform the practice in question. With regard to veneration, as I described above, the Buddha explains that if the brahman plowing his fields had come to him, he could have venerated two buddhas, for "in this place" he stands and the remains of Kāśyapa lie.[20] To reiterate, this practice requires physical proximity to the object of veneration.

The process of *darśana* is, likewise, location specific, for ordinary mortals can only see what is near to them. In this passage, however, the practices associated with *darśana* are not fully clear. When the Buddha asks the monks if they want to see the assemblage of Kāśyapa's remains, they assent and explain that "at the sight of it, monks can cultivate *prasāda* in their minds." In the previous chapter on *prasāda*, I explained the potential pitfalls of such a practice for monks. Unlike the *Cakravartivyākṛta-avadāna*, however, here there is no direct dismissal of the practice. The Buddha merely counters with an injunction that makes no mention of *prasāda*: "Contemplate its appearance, monks, for it will disappear."[21]

Regardless of the specifics of the monks' practice, their request reaffirms the idea that the experience of *prasāda* arises from having *darśana* of an appropriate object. But what does one do when it is not possible to have *darśana* of a ritual object, such as Kāśyapa's remains? How can one engage with an object that appears as nothing more than a spot of earth, an unmarked place on the ground?

In the Toyikā story, after King Prasenajit hears that the assemblage of Kāśyapa's remains has been made visible, he sets off with a large entourage to have *darśana* of it. Unfortunately, it disappears before they arrive, so they are understandably "miserable and dejected." Within the visual logic of these stories, ritual practice is dependent on visible objects, and it is unclear what these pilgrims can do at the site if there is nothing there for them to see. Even the monks for whom the assemblage of Kāśyapa's remains was raised are instructed only to engage with it visually. Other than contemplating the appearance of Kāśyapa's remains, no mention is made of any other practice.

Without visual recourse to the assemblage of Kāśyapa's remains, a lay disciple decides instead to circumambulate the place where his remains had been in sight. As he does so, "he thus formed a thought with his mind" regarding the amount of merit he will accrue from this act. Though the lay disciple does not cultivate *prasāda*, this particular way of forming a thought in one's mind is shown to yield remarkable results elsewhere in the *Divyāvadāna*. As I mentioned in chapter 3, a beggar woman in the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna* makes an offering of an oil lamp with "a great resolution of mind"[22] and uses the root of

virtue constituted by this act to make a fervent aspiration to become Śākyamuni Buddha himself.

Strangely, even though the lay disciple is not described as cultivating *prasāda* as he circumambulates Kāśyapa's no-longer-visible remains, the Buddha grasps the lay disciple's thought and then recites a verse extolling the rewards of those who circumambulate shrines of a buddha while being *prasāda* in mind. To repeat—

> Hundreds of thousands of gold coins or nuggets
> are not equal to the wise man, *prasāda* in mind,
> who walks around shrines of a buddha.

This verse raises two immediate questions. The first question is whether the Buddha is praising the lay disciple whose thought he intercepted or chastising him. The lay disciple is never said to be "*prasāda* in mind" but only to have "formed a thought with his mind," so the Buddha could be disciplining him by describing a more efficacious practice. But this doesn't seem to be the case. It is said that "after hearing this [verse of the Buddha], many hundreds of thousands of beings also placed lumps of clay there as offerings."[23] They understood what the Buddha said as words of encouragement, perhaps not differentiating between being "*prasāda* in mind" and "forming a thought with one's mind." Then in what follows, as other people perform ritual acts at Toyikā, they too form thoughts with their minds regarding the efficacy of their offerings, and the Buddha again responds that those who are *prasāda* in mind and perform such acts will enjoy great rewards. This similarity between being "*prasāda* in mind" and "forming a thought with one's mind" also occurs in the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna*, which I discussed in chapter 3. While the qualities of this latter mental state are unclear, the text is explicit that it functions similarly to *prasāda*, and characters themselves seem to confuse the two.

The second question is whether the "place" (*pradeśa*) that the lay disciple circumambulates is actually a "shrine of a buddha" (*buddhacaitya*). Judging by those hundreds and thousands of beings who follow the lay disciple's example and make offerings there, this does seem to be the case. But what makes a "place" into a "shrine"? What makes a site ritually effective, and how should one engage with it?

Creating Shrines, Making Use of Places

In one of his early articles, Gregory Schopen addresses the question of the connection between "a spot of earth" or "a place on the ground" (*pṛthivīpradeśa*)

and "a true *caitya*" (*caityabhūta*). Schopen (1975: 175) maintains that in certain materials the connection involves the cult of the book—that the Buddha is present, in some sense, "on the spot where the *dharmaparyāya* is or is recited, etc." and that "this in itself would be quite enough to render that spot sacred, to make it a powerful *caitya*." Though there are great linguistic similarities in the case of the Toyikā story—for the Buddha is said to sit down upon "a place on the ground"[24]—it isn't clear that this is an instance of "simply using the term *pṛthivīpradeśa* to indicate the place where the *dharmaparyāya* was" (Schopen 1975: 174).

In more recent work, Schopen (1997: 29, 131–132) directly considers this connection of "place" and "shrine" in the Toyikā story. In his assessment, the text "is concerned solely with the sacralization of that otherwise unmarked piece of ground by acts of worship and the establishment of a festival (*maha*)" (1997: 29). While Schopen is right that the text is concerned with the sacralization of the site at Toyikā—with somehow endowing it with sacred significance, with marking it as a site of ritual efficacy—the text is also interested in explaining how the ritual efficacy of such a site arises. And this problematic doesn't seem to involve the cult of the book. Instead, it involves the act of "making use of" (*paribhoga*) something.

Now in the Toyikā story, the Buddha first explains that if the brahman plowing his fields had come to him, "in this place" he could have venerated two buddhas. Ānanda then asks the Buddha to sit down there so that "this piece of earth will be made use of by two perfectly awakened buddhas—previously by the perfectly awakened Kāśyapa and at present by the Blessed One."

Judging by Ānanda's request that the Buddha sit down there so that the place will be twice "made use of," the internment of Kāśyapa's bones there already constituted a making use of the spot, but the Buddha's standing there did not. It seems that for the Buddha to make use of the spot, he needs to sit down on it—perhaps understood as a need to touch it, to engage with it more physically.

In the version of the Toyikā story in the *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā*, this notion of a shrine being constituted by an object that has been made use of is stated explicitly. There the Buddha explains to a brahman "the three kinds of shrines: shrines for bodily remains, memorial shrines, and shrines by use."[25] In a commentary to the *Khuddaka-pāṭha*, the great fifth-century scholar Buddhaghosa clarifies this classificatory system:

> It should be built up, thus it is a shrine—it is said that it should be the object of *pūjā*. Or, it is a shrine because it has been built up. Moreover, it is of three kinds: a shrine by use, a memorial shrine,

and a relic shrine. In this regard, the Bodhi tree is a shrine by use, an image of the Buddha is a memorial shrine, a stūpa with a reliquary that contains a relic is a relic shrine.[26]

In regard to the creation of shrines, it seems that there may have been a connection between making use of an object and sitting on it or in its presence. Both "the place" (*pradeśa*) in question in the Toyikā story and the Bodhi tree in Buddhaghosa's example are apparently made use of by the Buddha's sitting there. In the story of the present that begins the *Kāliṅgabodhi-jātaka* (Ja iv, 228–230; trans. in Cowell et al. 1990: iv, 142–143), a Bodhi tree is likewise transformed into a "shrine by use" by the Buddha's sitting at its base and meditating.[27] Though Kāśyapa's bones would technically be a shrine for bodily remains according to this schema, this doesn't negate the interpretation that Kāśyapa's bones still make use of the spot, for they too could be said to have an active connection with it.

This notion of "making use of" is further glossed in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*. As Gregory Schopen explains, monastics are shown to be obligated to make use of things that people give them as a way of generating merit for those donors. Hence, the notion of "merit resulting from use" (*paribhogānvyaṃ puṇyam*) is applied to a range of monastic offerings (Schopen 1996: 112ff.).[28] Much like these examples, here too there is a sense that certain objects must be put to use as a way of creating merit.[29] Here, however, merit is not created as a gift-in-turn or a payment of goods to an individual donor. Instead, merit is created by dint of transforming a place into a more potent field of merit for any future donor.[30]

Now in the Toyikā story, this passage concerning the logic of making use of something has multiple concerns, and primary among them is promoting pilgrimage to shrines of a buddha. The text seems to contend that a "place" becomes a "shrine of a buddha" when it is made use of by a buddha, and this occurs through close physical contact. If this is the case, then the notion of a "shrine of a buddha" has a potentially wide signification, encompassing any place that a buddha sat or slept.[31] India may very well be filled with such shrines, whether they are recognized or not.

Yet how does one know if a place has been transformed into a "shrine of a buddha"? In the *Kunāla-avadāna*, for example, when Upagupta brings Aśoka to various sites associated with the Buddha's life and explains that "in this place" such-and-such event occurred, are these sites merely "places" or also "shrines of a buddha"? Did the Buddha's activities in these places constitute a making use of them or were these activities inert, as standing apparently was in the Toyikā story?[32] When one considers the exhortations that the Buddha later makes in the

Toyikā story regarding the great rewards accrued from ritual practices at "shrines of a buddha," this question of the status of these sites becomes crucial.

The Toyikā story also seems to have another purpose: to appropriate and consolidate religious power. The Toyikā story attempts to incorporate the Toyikā site into Gautama Buddha's biography and hence make Kāśyapa's remains into a site of pilgrimage within Gautama's dispensation. These efforts may very well have been successful, for Fa-hsien, in the fifth century, and Hsuan-tsang, in the seventh century, are both said to have visited the place where Kāśyapa's full body was enshrined.[33]

John Strong argues that the various Toyikā stories may attest to a larger Buddhist project of using the cults of previous buddhas, such as Kāśyapa, to appropriate sites associated with other divinities into Śākyamuni's dispensation. As Strong (1999: 10; cf. Strong 2004: 39–44) explains,

> The cult of previous Buddhas, in fact, would seem to have been an ideal way for incorporating non-Buddhist, pre-Buddhist or brahmanical elements into the Buddhist fold. By identifying indigenous divinities and local sacred places with *past* Buddhas, Buddhists could effectively "convert" them to Buddhism while still maintaining them at a distance.[34]

While this project of incorporation is somewhat vague in the Toyikā story in the *Divyāvadāna*—the sacralization of the "place" in question merely creates a Buddhist site on an area that abuts a brahman's property—in other versions of the story, it is more explicit. The version of the story in the *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā*, for example, tells of a land grab by which a brahmanical site is transformed into a Buddhist one. As Strong (1999: 9) nicely summarizes:

> The Buddha and his entourage, approaching the village of Todeyya (Skt., Toyikā), come to a shrine, a "god-place"—devaṭṭhāna—that is apparently dedicated to some local divinity. The Buddha sits down next to it and sends Ānanda to summon the brahmin who is plowing a nearby field. The brahmin comes but instead of venerating the Buddha, he pays his respects only to the shrine. The Buddha then asks him about the place he has just venerated and the brahmin answers that the shrine (which he now calls a "cetiyaṭṭhāna," "a caitya place") has long been there and that worshipping it is an old custom of his people. The Buddha then reveals to him that this shrine is actually the site of the golden caitya of the Buddha Kāśyapa, a replica of which he then fashions in mid-air, using his supernatural powers. This is enough to convert the brahmin and his shrine to Buddhism.

One can see a similar co-option of brahmanical phenomena in the incident that precedes the Toyikā story in the *Indrabrāhmaṇa-avadāna*. The Buddha tells an arrogant brahman named Indra that he should look underneath the pit in his home where the *agnihotra* offering is made and that there he'll find a "post" (*yaṣṭi*) made of *gośīrṣa* sandalwood that is the length of the Buddha's body. The brahman does so, and as a result becomes full of *prasāda*. He then goes to the Buddha and receives teachings, at which time he directly experiences the reward of the stream-enterer. The brahman then asks the Buddha if he can celebrate a festival with the *gośīrṣa*-sandalwood post, and the Buddha gives his permission. Then,

> in a remote place, with great respect, he raised[35] that post and a festival was celebrated. Realizing that this festival would promote virtue, other brahmans and householders as well bound *kuśa* grass [for offerings]. Since this festival with a post was celebrated by the brahman Indra, it came to be known as the Indramaha—the Indramaha (Indra Festival).[36]

While the Indramaha is well known in Sanskrit sources as a brahmanical festival that originated with the gift of a post by the great god Indra,[37] here the festival is given a Buddhist origin. Instead of the Indramaha being so called because it is in praise of the god Indra, the idea here is that the festival is actually in praise of the Buddha but named after the brahman Indra who originated it. With this etiological story, a brahmanical festival not only becomes a Buddhist one, but good brahmans are shown to be Buddhist. Though I can find no reference to a brahmanical festival called Toyikāmaha, the parallels between these two stories in the *Indrabrāhmaṇa-avadāna* are unmistakable.

The most blatant aspect of this grab at power, however, occurs through the ritual actions that are performed at Toyikā—most notably, the offering of lumps of clay. Following the example of the lay disciple who offered lumps of clay at Toyikā, and bearing in mind the Buddha's words that "hundreds of thousands of gold coins or nuggets are not equal to one, *prasāda* in mind, who places a single lump of clay at a shrine of a buddha," many hundreds of thousands of beings place lumps of clay there as offerings. Though the site had been unmarked, it is now presumably piled high with an enormous mound of clay. In short, a stūpa has been created. As John Strong (1999: 17) observes,

> This, to be sure, is a commemorative stūpa; its mode of construction makes it clear that the remains of [the Buddha] Kāśyapa are not enshrined in it. But it is exactly the way the stūpa at Toyikā is built in the Dharmaguptaka, Mahīśāsaka, and the Mahāsāṃghika Vinayas,

> except that in the latter, King Prasenajit eventually arrives with seven hundred carts filled with bricks and asks the Buddha for permission to "enlarge" (and obviously to reinforce) the dirt stūpa.

The Toyikā story, in short, seeks to transform the Toyikā site into a recognized and *recognizable* "shrine of a buddha" (and a doubly powerful one at that) and hence into a site of pilgrimage.

Prasāda, Presence, and Practice

Now I want to return to the representation of the practice of *prasāda* in the Toyikā story, and how such a practice can be done. Although there are accounts elsewhere of a stūpa for Kāśyapa at Toyikā, and one may have been built with the lumps of clay described above, the site of Kāśyapa's remains is described as unmarked. It is referred to only as a "place."[38] How then is the practitioner to generate *prasāda?* If the site has no visual marker, then presumably there is no *prāsādika* object at which practitioners can gaze in order to generate *prasāda*. Again Schopen's work provides a useful heuristic.

In "Burial *Ad Sanctos* and the Physical Presence of the Buddha in Early Indian Buddhism," Schopen (1997: 114–147) discusses the Toyikā story, and he argues, among other things, for the functional equivalence of an assemblage of relics and a living buddha. To this end, Schopen cites the above passage from the Toyikā story in which the Buddha laments that the brahman plowing his field missed an opportunity to venerate two buddhas. He then quotes the more explicit verse that occurs later in the story after hundreds and thousands of beings have already performed a variety of ritual acts at the site where Kāśyapa is buried. As the Buddha observes,

> One may honor [a buddha] still living
> as well as one passed into final nirvāṇa.
> Cultivating *prasāda* equally in one's mind,
> here there is no difference in merit.[39]

As Schopen (1997: 132) remarks, "the implications here are that there is no distinction between a living Buddha and an assemblage of relics—both make the sacred person equally present as an object of worship, and the presence of either makes available the same opportunity to make merit." This equivalence, in turn, has important implications for Schopen's argument regarding Buddhist mortuary practices. According to Schopen, dying or being buried in the presence of a buddha had reputedly salvific effects, and in consideration of the above, this could have meant in the presence of a living buddha or in the

presence of buddha relics. This latter phenomenon, Schopen maintains, may offer an explanation for the archeological evidence at many Buddhist sites of numerous votive stūpas containing the bones and ash of practitioners in the presence of a main stūpa.

While I agree with Schopen's speculations regarding Buddhist mortuary practices, more needs to be said about the proposed equivalence of buddhas and buddha relics vis-à-vis the practice of *prasāda*—for in the Toyikā story, there is no mention of any mortuary practices. Instead, the proposition that buddhas and buddha relics are functionally equivalent bears only on the logistics of the practice of *prasāda*. The narrative function of this proposed equivalence is to demonstrate that, in addition to the Buddha himself, the assemblage of Kāśyapa's remains is also a *prāsādika* object.

Yet the practice of *prasāda* that is associated with Kāśyapa's remains has been reworked. In the previous chapter, seeing *prāsādika* objects was shown to lead to the arising of *prasāda*. Here, however, the arising of *prasāda* requires a more proximate physical engagement with *prāsādika* objects. The efficacy of the practice necessitates presence.

Now in the beginning of "Burial *Ad Sanctos*," Schopen makes a similar argument about the ritual efficacy of presence based on a passage in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and a corresponding account in the Sanskrit version of the text from Turfan in China. In the former, the Buddha maintains that there are four places that "a noble son who has *saddhā* should see and should powerfully experience"[40]—the sites of the Buddha's birth, awakening, first teaching of the dhamma, and final nibbāna. As the Buddha explains, "Thinking, 'Here the Tathāgata was born,' Ānanda, the noble son who has *saddhā* should see and should powerfully experience that site";[41] and so on for the other sites as well. The Buddha continues that those "monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen who have *saddhā*"[42] will visit these four sites and have the thoughts, 'Here the Tathāgata was born,' and so forth. Then the Buddha says,

> Ānanda, while engaged in traveling to these shrines, those who are *pasāda* in mind and die, all of them, after the dissolution of their bodies, after death, will be reborn in an excellent existence in a heavenly world.[43]

The Sanskrit recension of the text preserves a similar sentiment:

> Those who are *prasāda* in mind and die in my presence, all of them who still have karma to work out will go to heaven.[44]

As Schopen (1997: 117) concludes from this passage, "the monk redactor of the text accepted as fact that a devout death that occurred within the range of

this presence [of the Buddha] assured for the individuals involved—and these were monks and laymen—rebirth in heaven."

In the above passage from the Sanskrit recension of the text, there are linguistic difficulties that are telling of a certain slippage with regard to the mechanics of the practice of *prasāda*. What I translate above as "in my presence" (*mamāntike*) could perhaps be read with the expression "*prasāda* in mind"—hence, "those who are *prasāda* in mind in my presence and die." In a lengthy footnote, Schopen addresses some of the interpretive difficulties of this passage, and he is right that the order of these terms in Sanskrit indicates the former reading and not the latter.[45] Nevertheless, to the best of my knowledge, the notion of dying in another's presence is unattested in the *Divyāvadāna*, while the stereotyped expression in the reverse order (i.e., object + *antike* + *cittaprasannaḥ*) occurs frequently.[46]

The reason that I mention this linguistic problem is that regardless of how one interprets this passage, whether one takes "in my presence" to be connected with "*prasāda* in mind" or "dying," in the events of the Toyikā story, it is only the former configuration that comes to bear. In other words, what is essential in the Toyikā story is not dying in the presence of a buddha but having *prasāda* in the presence of a buddha. And what is very clear from the text is that this practice is equally valid in the presence of a living buddha and in the presence of a buddha-as-relics.

This complex of ideas and the implications for practice that they suggest take on an even greater importance in consideration of the widespread currency of the above verse that equates honoring a living buddha and honoring one who has passed into final nirvāṇa. Schopen cites a number of texts that contain this verse or close variants of it—the Khotanense text of the *Pradakṣiṇa-sūtra*, the *Buddhacarita* of Aśvaghoṣa, the Schedkungsformular manuscript from Turkistan, and the *Caityapradakṣiṇagāthā* (what Waldschmidt calls a *sondertext* of the Sanskrit *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*).[47] These last two texts, in addition to containing the verse in question, also preserve versions of many of the verses that precede this verse in the *Divyāvadāna* and in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*. And it is these verses that describe the utility of different offerings made at shrines of a buddha by one who is *prasāda* in mind. As Schopen (1997: 132) remarks, "Notice that all of these texts emphasize that the individual is to 'make his mind equally devout' [i.e., cultivate *prasāda* equally in one's mind] in regard to the actual presence and the relic (*samaṃ cittaṃ prasādya; same cittaprasāde hi; sems dge ba ni mtshungs 'gyur na; yid kyi dang ba mnyam na*; etc.)." What is special about being in the presence of a living buddha or a buddha's relics is the opportunity it affords to cultivate *prasāda*.

Prasāda, Presence, and Relics

Implicit in the Toyikā story and in these accounts that Schopen cites is that there is a close connection between the practice of *prasāda* and rituals that involve relics or stūpas. This same connection is also evident in a variety of other Buddhist texts. As Kevin Trainor (1997: 166; cf. 1989: 187–189) explains, in various Pali materials, there is a trope of practitioners witnessing the relics of a buddha performing miracles, and "one of the primary words used to describe this response, which recurs throughout the Pali textual tradition, is *pasanna* and its cognates."

Such a response, for example, occurs in the post-canonical *Thūpavaṃsa*, which narrates King Duṭṭhagāmiṇī's efforts to enshrine the Buddha's relics in the Mahāthūpa (Great Stūpa). At one point in the text, the relics of Gautama Buddha fly into the air and simultaneously produce fire and water. The text explains that "upon seeing this miracle, one hundred and twenty million gods and mortals cultivated *pasāda* and attained arhatship."[48] Subsequently, when King Duṭṭhagāmiṇī installs the relics,

> the great earth shuddered, shook, and quaked up to its ocean limits, the great ocean was agitated, lightning flashed in the sky, a sudden downpour of rain fell, and the six heavens were in a single tumult. When the king saw this marvel, he was possessed of *pasāda* and performed *pūjā* to the relics with his white parasol with golden festoons. He then gave [to those relics] the sovereignty of Tambapaṇṇidīpa (Copper Leaf Island) for a week, and after unfastening his ornaments and finery worth thirty million [coins], he offered them as well. Likewise, all the dancing women, ministers, and the rest of the multitude and the gods also offered all their ornaments.[49]

Trainor also cites a passage from the *Dhātuvaṃsa*, a similarly post-canonical work that likewise chronicles the distribution of relics after the Buddha's final nibbāna. In that text, when the forehead-bone relic of the Buddha flies into the air and performs the miracle of fire and water, it elicits the following reaction from the people below:

> When the people saw the Teacher's miracle,
> which they had never seen before,
> they were enraptured and found *pasāda* in the Victor.
> To such an excellent shrine [each person] offered their scents,
> garlands, and jewelry, bowing their heads in veneration.[50]

In these examples from the *Thūpavaṃsa* and the *Dhātuvaṃsa*, the practice of *prasāda* (or in this case, *pasāda*) is likewise connected to stūpas and relics,[51] but the logic of engagement is reversed. While the Toyikā story stresses physical engagement with a mortuary site, here it is a visual connection that is foregrounded. In both cases, though, the arising of *pasāda* culminates in the making of an offering. As Trainor (1997: 171; cf. 1989: 187) concludes,

> The relics perform marvels that recall those performed by the Buddha before his passing away, and the effect of these marvels on the witnesses is the mental state of *pasāda*. This mental state is also closely connected with rituals of venerating the relics, including both material offerings and gestures of obeisance. The meaning of all this is clear: the activity of seeing and ritually worshipping the relics of the Buddha gives rise to positive mental states.

While I agree with Trainor that here the relics of the Buddha are represented as agents of *pasāda* just as the Buddha or, for that matter, other *prāsādika* objects, I would reverse the order of events that Trainor describes. It is not the case that "ritually worshipping the relics of the Buddha" gives rise to the mental state of *pasāda*, but that being possessed of *pasāda* culminates in acts of ritual worship—such as offering the sovereignty of Tambapaṇṇidīpa for a week.[52]

This connection between *prasāda* and the veneration of shrines is also apparent in later avadāna materials, raising the possibility, as Jonathan Walters (1997) has already done, that avadānas in general are somehow tied to rituals involving shrines and stūpas. For example, in the *Ahorātravavratacaityasevānuśaṃsa-avadāna*, the tenth chapter of the *Aśoka-avadānamālā*, the following verse occurs:

> Those men, full of *prasāda*, who anoint a shrine
> of a perfectly awakened one with the five fragrances
> will become individuals [devoted to] the highest good,
> powerful, luminous, and with bodies that are fragrant.[53]

While, in the examples from the *Thūpavaṃsa* and the *Dhātuvaṃsa*, *pasāda* arises from seeing buddha relics perform miraculous deeds, this verse from the *Ahorātravavratacaityasevānuśaṃsa-avadāna* is reminiscent of the numerous verses in the Toyikā story that extol the virtues of being "*prasāda* in mind" while performing ritual acts at shrines of a buddha. Though it is possible that in these cases a visual connection is necessary for *prasāda* to arise in those individuals who visit Buddhist shrines, proximity seems to be the primary cause. But how is it that *prasāda* arises? Is simply being in the presence of a shrine of a buddha sufficient cause? Is it enough just to see a *prāsādika* object?

6

Politics and Aesthetics

Perceptual activity nonconsciously spreads to behavioral representations, increasing the likelihood of behaving similarly to others in the current environment . . . Our conclusion that the effect of perception on behavior is an automatic process that does not depend on conscious choice is consistent with recent neuropsychological findings as well.

—Tanya L. Chartrand and John A. Bargh, *The Chameleon Effect: The Perception-Behavior Link and Social Interaction*

How could one agree to weighing the alleged shortcomings of an automatic process and its minor disadvantages against the real havoc it creates in thought—a phenomenon that manifests itself against all the coercive hierarchies of the practical-rational world, all the rotten clandestine and transferential "combinings" of desire in the villainous domain of aesthetics, all the *agents provocateurs*, in short, of realist thought?

—Salvador Dali, *New General Considerations Regarding the Mechanism of the Paranoiac Phenomenon from the Surrealist Point of View*

In the Toyikā story, as I discussed in chapter 5, "shrines of a buddha" can function as de facto *prāsādika* objects, be they "shrines for bodily remains" or "shrines by use." Being in the presence of these objects,

moreover, allows for *prasāda* to arise and for the giving that follows from *prasāda* to ensue. As in those cases when an individual sees a *prāsādika* object, here too the arising of *prasāda* is represented as having less to do with an individual's personal efforts than with the force that these shrines exert. They are the "agents of *prasāda*," and they, not the individual, are the primary cause of the arising of *prasāda*.

The unerring ability of buddhas and shrines of a buddha to generate *prasāda* is never questioned, nor is the unerring ability of *prasāda*-initiated practices to generate merit for the Buddhist practitioner. Their efficacy is not in question. But what are the implications of such a seemingly fail-safe practice? What would it mean to get such a practice wrong? What would happen if an individual went to a recognized *prasāda*-inducing object and did not feel the need to make an offering? In what follows, I will discuss the apparently automatic and spontaneous nature of *prasāda*-initiated giving and the implications of such naturalism. I will then discuss the erotics of *prasāda* and the significance this has for an aesthetics of *prasāda*. These questions of agency and aesthetics have particularly important implications for the sociology of *prasāda* and, perhaps, the politics behind it.

The Power of Objects

The practice of *prasāda* at Toyikā is represented as happening rather perfunctorily, almost automatically. One goes to a shrine, *prasāda* arises, and offerings are made—be they lumps of mud or oil lamps—and great rewards are predicted as a result of these deeds. Here, too the efficacy of *prasāda* does not rely on previously purifying the mind or cultivating proper intention but instead on being in the right place with respect to *prāsādika* objects. But how does all this happen with apparently so little effort, and what does it mean that it does?

In his discussion of contemporary ritual practices in a village in North India, Christopher Pinney offers an account of one such practice that seems to happen, as it were, automatically. A local resident named C.B. Tiwari advocates this practice, a six-sentence mantra that invokes Paramahaṃsji. As Pinney (1997a: 166–167) explains,

> The great appeal of the technique—and this is what Tiwari continually stresses—is that faith or belief is not necessary, desires will be fulfilled without belief (*bina vishvas*). The analogies that tumble forth from Tiwari's lips are all grounded in a technological world in which all that matters is effect: "Suppose that you want to use some electric

> power—you make a connection, fit your tube light, lay the wiring, provide a switch, connect this to the overhead wires. If the power is available, the tube is fine, the wiring is fine, the switch is fine, the tube light will come on—(*chalega*!)—with belief or without belief"—he flicked his thumb to and fro as though switching the current on and off. To produce surges of electricity in one's own life all that was required was the utterance of six sentences.

Although this example of efficacy as electricity describes a verbal utterance and not a moment of visual engagement, the principle involved here well describes the visual logic that governs many of the interactions between practitioner and divine image that Pinney (2002) describes elsewhere. What matters is being "plugged in"—reciting the right mantra or, as seems to be the case in the Toyikā example, being present in the right place and following ritual protocol. When the right conditions are met, the current will flow—be it electricity or *prasāda*.

The power of objects, both auditory and visual, to affect individuals seemingly automatically is also well attested in Sanskrit literature. In the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, it is said that when the women of Vṛndāvan hear the music of Kṛṣṇa's flute, their "minds are captivated by Kṛṣṇa,"[1] and regardless of the consequences, they promptly stop whatever they are doing—milking cows, feeding infants, even washing themselves—and go to him. Though various family members try to stop them, "they do not turn back; Kṛṣṇa has stolen their hearts, and they are enchanted."[2] Compelled by Kṛṣṇa's flute, they are inextricably drawn to him, and only physical force can hold them back. Those women who are physically restrained are overcome with desire and can only meditate upon him. It is this cathexis that leads directly to their liberation from material reality and karmic bondage.

The listener of the tale, King Parikṣit, is baffled and asks how it is that these women, who know Kṛṣṇa only as a material being, a lover, can attain emancipation from material reality. In response, one commentator, Śrīdhārasvāmin, makes the following point: "The power of a thing does not require [our] understanding [in order for it to be effective]. The drink of immortality achieves its effects when it is drunk even if the drinker thinks otherwise."[3] Kṛṣṇa's power is not contingent on belief. All one needs is to be directly wired; one does not need to know how the wiring works.

Similar examples of the power of objects also occur in the *Mahābhārata*, but there the results are more sexual than spiritual and those affected are men, not women. For example in the "Ādi-parvan" ("The Book of the Beginning") (1.120.1–13), Lord Indra, threatened by the sage Śaradvat's austerities, sends the

nymph Jālapadī to stop him. When Śaradvat sees her, a shudder comes over him, and although he maintains his poise, "his semen flows forth, though he isn't aware of it."[4] In the following chapter (1.121.3–5), the great seer Bharadvāja sees the nymph Ghṛtācī alight, just after she has bathed. The wind blows her skirt away, and he immediately ejaculates. In the "Āraṇyaka-parvan" ("The Book of the Forest") (3.110.13–15), a glimpse of the nymph Urvaśī has much the same effect on the great seer Kāśyapa; he promptly ejaculates, despite his long engagement in ascetic austerities.[5]

In each of these cases, the sight of a divine maiden causes a man to have an orgasm spontaneously, even though each of these men is a religious practitioner engaged in rigorous ascetic discipline involving sexual abstinence. But despite the self-control they have acquired through their austerities, the right image leads them to ejaculate *automatically*, without their consent or even, necessarily, their awareness. The text assumes that humans have an "innate, species-wide disposition to respond to particular perceptual stimuli in predetermined ways," what Alfred Gell terms "ethology" (1992: 44). It is, as it were, a natural law.

Contrary to what these stories tell us, such visual and visceral interactions are *not* automatic. The electrical outlet that Tiwari describes has been socially engineered, and built into its construction is a cover-plate that masks its origins and full range of functions. Bodily and visual practices, such as those that involve *prasāda*, have likewise been socially and culturally inscribed.[6]

Automatic Actions, Politics, and Pornography

One helpful way of thinking about these seemingly automatic actions follows from Pierre Bourdieu's well-known notion of *habitus*, whose "structuring structures" are said to inscribe in us a belief that many of our learned and conditioned behaviors are actually natural and innate. "Automatic and impersonal, significant without intending to signify," Bourdieu (1999: 80) writes, "ordinary practices lend themselves to an understanding no less automatic and impersonal."

My interest, however, is not in trying "to define rigorously the status of the semi-learned grammars of practice—sayings, proverbs, gnomic poems, spontaneous 'theories' which always accompany even the most 'automatic' practices" (1999: 20). There isn't enough data from the Buddhist world in the early centuries of the Common Era to progress very far in such an endeavor. What is instructive, though, is Bourdieu's contention that such thoroughgoing inscriptions of practice serve political ends. To quote Bourdieu (1999: 49) at length,

> If all societies and, significantly, all the "totalitarian institutions," in Goffman's phrase, that seek to produce a new man through a process of "deculturation" and "reculturation" set such store on the seemingly most insignificant details of *dress, bearing*, physical and verbal *manners*, the reason is that, treating the body as a memory, they entrust to it in abbreviated and practical, i.e., mnemonic, form the fundamental principles of the arbitrary content of the culture. The principles em-bodied in this way are placed beyond the grasp of consciousness, and hence cannot be touched by voluntary, deliberate transformation, cannot even be made explicit; nothing seems more ineffable, more incommunicable, more inimitable, and, therefore, more precious, than that given body, *made* body by the transubstantiation achieved by the hidden persuasion of an implicit pedagogy, capable of instilling a whole cosmology, an ethic, a metaphysic, a political philosophy, through injunctions as insignificant as "stand up straight" or "don't hold your knife in your left hand."[7]

As Bourdieu (1999: 164) observes, "every established order tends to produce (to very different degrees and with very different means) the naturalization of its own arbitrariness," and such a structure leads to what he terms *doxa*—the experience of "a quasi-perfect correspondence between the objective order and the subjective principles of organization" such that "the natural and social world appears as self-evident." In other words, the conditioned comes to seem unconditioned and natural—not contrived but somehow preordained.

Such a doxic view permeates the *Divyāvadāna*, for it presumes throughout that Buddhist cognitive and causal realities are natural laws, not religious creations. This conception of Buddhist teaching and practice is particularly evident in the *Divyāvadāna*'s accounts of *śraddhā* and *prasāda*.

In the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, Koṭikarṇa isn't said to possess *śraddhā*—to be a Buddhist believer—or to be a Buddhist practitioner until after his otherworldly journey. What then constitutes his "conversion"—if one can call it that—is seeing that the way the world functions is in accordance with Buddhist law (i.e., karma) and that the best way to succeed in the world is to follow Buddhist precepts, such as not taking life and making offerings. Likewise, Koṭikarṇa's father, Balasena, is never said to have *śraddhā* in the Buddha or to engage in Buddhist practices. Even the offerings that he makes, which appear to be successful, don't involve Buddhist recipients. The warrant of the truthfulness of these beliefs and practices isn't the testimony of the Buddha, but seeing for oneself that they are true.

Accounts of *prasāda* are similarly delineated. Inasmuch as the mechanics of *prasāda* abide by the laws of the natural world, the efficacy of *prasāda* is not particularly Buddhist in construction but simply the way the world works. The laws that govern the mechanics of *prasāda* are the laws of karma, which in turn are the laws of nature. In the Toyikā narrative it is said that great rewards come to those who visit shrines of a buddha and make offerings while being "*prasāda* in mind." Notice that no mention is made of this mental state being directed toward the Buddha. Seeing *prāsādika* objects makes one "*prasāda* in mind" regardless of one's thoughts, feelings, or intentions. Everyone at Toyikā is equally affected. Receptivity is the default. It would take some rupture or crisis to be otherwise.

In addition to this mental leveling of the practitioner's field of activity, the story also features a sociological leveling. While the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna* shows the experience of *prasāda* to be open to the poor and closed to gods and kings, suggesting a subaltern configuration for *prasāda*, the Toyikā story represents the practice as being available and efficacious for the hundreds and thousands of people who make *prasāda*-initiated offerings. Presumably these include King Prasenajit "along with the women of his harem, as well as princes, ministers, military commanders, townspeople, and villagers."[8] No sociological study of this representation of the practice is necessary. Individual tastes and habits are elided, as are, apparently, differences in gender, age, race, and class.

It is this representation of a sociological leveling, a uniformity of response, that brings to mind Bourdieu's observation that seemingly automatic behavior betrays a social and political agenda.[9] Yet how does one get at the politics behind this discourse on *prasāda*?

An instructive analogy can be found in *Only Words*, Catherine MacKinnon's (1993) tract concerning the effects of viewing pornography. Like the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*, the probable source for the narratives in the *Divyāvadāna*, this is a legal text, and its mode of argumentation is similarly didactic. Though MacKinnon's piece relies on logic that at times seems tortuously stretched, its naturalized discourse regarding the power of pornographic objects has striking similarities with the rhetoric in the *Divyāvadāna* regarding the power of *prāsādika* objects. These similarities, in turn, suggest a more political reading for the discourse of *prasāda*.

In *Only Words*, MacKinnon claims that consumers of pornography are compelled to live out the pornographic images that they see. These images, she claims, are performatives that men have no choice but to obey, and as such they are not mediated or moderated by thoughts that men may have. This is not to say that pornography does not contain or engender ideas, but as MacKinnon (1993: 21–22) explains,

> the way it works is not as a thought or through its ideas as such. The message of these materials, and there is one, as there is to all conscious activity, is "get her," pointing at all women . . . This message is addressed directly to the penis, delivered through an erection, and taken out on women in the real world. The content of this message is not unique to pornography. It is the function of pornography in effectuating it that is unique.

Like others who have claimed that pornography can "provoke gut reactions" (Kuhn 1985: 21) or elicit "'automatic' bodily reactions" (Williams 1999: 5; cf. *Mahābhārata* citations above), MacKinnon (1993: 61) claims that pornography

> manipulates the perpetrator's socialized body relatively primitively and directly . . . This is men's beloved "hard-wiring," giving them that exculpatory sense that the sexual desires so programmed are natural and so operate before and beyond their minds—got there before they did, as it were.

Much like the Toyikā narrative, MacKinnon's work elides differences between subjectivities, such as young and old, gay and straight, by positing that the spectacle of certain objects imposes a uniformity and inevitability of response. Furthermore, these reactions—regardless of whether they are "primitive" or, as in Bourdieu's *habitus*, learned—produce responses that are seemingly innate and automatic. MacKinnon's belief in the efficacy of pornography is not unlike C. B. Tiwari's belief in the efficacy of the Paramahaṃsji mantra; both share in the same belief that "faith or belief is not necessary, desires will be fulfilled without belief."

In addition to these similarities between the "hard-wiring" of viewers of pornography as described by MacKinnon and the mechanics of *prasāda* as depicted in the *Divyāvadāna*, the politics for which MacKinnon marshals her account also has its parallels in the *Divyāvadāna*. As a lawyer committed to the eradication of pornography, MacKinnon is concerned with the legalities that govern the production, dissemination, and consumption of pornographic images. One loophole that she sees in this legislation involves the notion that there is thinking—"mental intermediation," as she terms it—on the part of consumers of pornography when they see pornographic images.[10] Instead, MacKinnon argues that pornography has so habituated and conditioned men in our society that pornographic images now evade these male viewer's critical faculties, neatly bypassing the brain, and addressing the penis directly. As MacKinnon (1993: 24) explains, "I am not saying that . . . [a rapist's] head is not attached to his body; I am saying that his body is attached to his head."

Though MacKinnon's argument is ripe for critique—she accounts for differences neither among pornographic images nor among subject-positions of the viewer (cf. Butler 1997)—her concern with the bodily effects of visual practices is useful for understanding the politics of the discourse of *prasāda*.[11]

It is the concern with the effects of visual objects, be they pornographic or *prāsādika*, that links together the prescriptive accounts in both the *Divyāvadāna* and MacKinnon's work. In both accounts certain images or words are more important for their function than their content. Such polemics betray an agenda, and in MacKinnon's case it is apparent: Seeing certain images (i.e., pornography) inevitably leads certain individuals (i.e., men) to perform certain actions (i.e., acts of violence against women), and therefore such images should be banned. Likewise in the Buddhist case, seeing or being in the presence of certain images (i.e., *prāsādika* objects) inevitably leads certain individuals (i.e., the poor, and perhaps others) to perform certain actions (i.e., acts of giving), and therefore such images should be sought out.

The politics of the discourse of *prasāda*, then, are the reverse of MacKinnon's. The message isn't prohibitive but advocatory: Regardless of your age, gender, or mental faculties (though financial and social standing do seem to matter in some configurations of the discourse), go and see *prāsādika* objects and—as naturally follows—make offerings. The results will be most desirable.

Many avadānas containing this discourse of *prasāda* are also structured in a way that is particularly conducive to inculcating such a rigid system of values. For example, Susan Suleiman's description of the early twentieth-century French didactic novel (*roman à thèse*) applies equally well to avadānas. As Suleiman (1993: 54) explains,

> the story told by a *roman à thèse* is essentially teleological—it is determined by a specific end, which exists "before" and "above" the story. The story calls for an unambiguous interpretation, which in turn implies a rule of action applicable (at least virtually) to the real life of the reader. The interpretation and the rule of action may be stated explicitly by a narrator who "speaks with the voice of Truth" and can therefore lay claim to absolute authority, or they may be supplied, on the basis of textual and contextual indices, by the reader. The only necessary condition is that the interpretation and the rule of action be unambiguous—in other words, that the story lend itself as little as possible to a "plural" reading.

Furthermore, the rhetorical means to achieve these ends involve redundancy,[12] "the presence (even if it is only implied, not stated) of a rule of action

addressed to the reader,"[13] and "the presence of a doctrinal intertext"[14] (1993: 56)—all features of avadāna literature.

While I don't want to claim that these attributes are necessarily markers of an intentionally political discourse, I do think that the discourse of *prasāda*, like avadānas and the *roman à thèse*, "seeks to impose a single 'correct' meaning on the world as on the text" (Suleiman 1993: xvi). The political implications of such a figuration are apparent.

Aesthetics, Erotics, and Corpothetics

Even though everyone among the hundreds and thousands of people in the Toyikā story get *prasāda* right, there are instances when individuals get *prasāda* wrong. There are the deviant few who misapprehend the "correct meaning" of *prasāda* and the monological truth for which it stands. This would be the rupture and crisis that I mentioned previously. But this moment of misapprehension is revealing. It helps to explain the aesthetics of the experience of *prasāda* and the consequences of the elision of "mental intermediation."

When one gets *prasāda* wrong, the problem is not that one has deliberated and consciously made a choice that is somehow mistaken. The problem is that one has a faulty disposition, a faulty nature—or, to follow Tiwari and MacKinnon's metaphor, faulty wiring. As a result of this fault, seeing a *prāsādika* object results not in the state of *prasāda* and the making of a *prasāda*-initiated offering but in a libidinal pleasure and a consequent urge to give.[15] This bifurcation of results highlights an overlap between *prāsādika* objects as those things that are ritually effective and those things that are "attractive," as in the frequently occurring string of epithets discussed in chapter 3—"handsome, good-looking, and attractive."[16] In both cases, an individual sees the Buddha or one of his disciples and is aroused to give, but offerings that arise from a libidinal impulse are rejected.

In the *Mākandika-avadāna*, for example, a wandering mendicant named Mākandika and his wife Sākali give birth to an incomparably beautiful daughter who is appropriately named Anupamā (Incomparable). When she grows up, her father decides to choose a husband for her based on this criterion: "I won't give this girl to anyone because of his high standing, nor because of his wealth or even his learning. Instead, I'll give her to whoever is as beautiful or more beautiful than she is."[17] One day, Mākandika happens to see the Buddha, "and at the sight of him, he is pleased and delighted."[18] He then reflects, "Such an ascetic as this one is *prāsādika*, is very good-looking, and captivates everyone. Indeed, a suitable husband is difficult to find for any woman,

but how much more so in the case of Anupamā. I have found a son-in-law!"[19] Thereafter, Mākandika informs his wife of his decision, and the two of them go to see the Buddha. When they catch sight of him, Mākandika's wife recognizes that the Buddha is a "great seer"[20] and realizes her mistake. "He won't accept our daughter as a devotee," she concludes. "Turn back. Let's go home."[21]

Disregarding his wife's assessment of the situation, Mākandika nevertheless has their daughter Anupamā adorned so that she may be presented to the Buddha as a bride. Mākandika's wife protests, and five times she concludes, "This is not a husband who will love our daughter. Turn back! Let's go home."[22] Eventually, Mākandika does offer his daughter's hand in marriage to the Buddha, and the Buddha destroys any such aspirations she might have had with what he himself regards as "repellent words":[23]

Brahman, even when I saw Māra's daughters,
I felt neither craving nor passion—
I have no desire at all for sensual pleasures.
Therefore I can't bring myself to touch this girl,
not even with my foot,
filled as she is with piss and shit.[24]

This account contains an odd mixture of sexualized and devotional discourse. At the sight of the Buddha, Mākandika isn't filled with *prasāda* but is instead "pleased and delighted" and eager to offer the Buddha his daughter in marriage. Mākandika recognizes no impropriety in this deed, for within the domestic sphere a "gift of a maiden" (*kanyādāna*) is an appropriate offering.[25] In this case, however, his arousal to give is in error. It arises not from *prasāda* but from libidinal desire. This is apparent when Mākandika first offers his daughter to the Buddha. He remarks,

May the Blessed One behold my virtuous daughter,
a shapely and well-adorned young woman.
I offer this amorous girl to you,
and with her behave like a man of virtue,
like the moon in the sky with [his wife] Rohiṇī.[26]

Although Mākandika addresses the Buddha as "Blessed One," seemingly acknowledging the Buddha's status as an eminent ascetic, he is apparently not aware that the Buddha is celibate,[27] for he then tells him to accept his daughter and behave with her "like a man of virtue."[28] Following the analogy to the moon and his wife Rohiṇī, he should behave like a good husband. But Mākandika's focus on beauty as the sole determining factor for marriage contravenes brahmanical injunctions as well (see Kane 1930–1962: ii, 429–431).

His response to the Buddha's beauty is multiply mistaken. He is both miswired and misguided.

By contrast, Mākandika's own wife recognizes the Buddha as a great seer, not a future son-in-law. Yet, she seems to be confused about what offering should be made. First, she complains that the Buddha won't accept their daughter as a devotee, as though they were offering their daughter to the Buddha as the prized gift of a new disciple.[29] But then she complains that the Buddha won't be a proper husband. Though the Buddha is many things to many people—a great seer, a teacher, a victor, and so on—he is a husband or a bridegroom to no one. In both cases, Mākandika's wife refers to their daughter as *kumārikā*, an affectionate, diminutive, and even desexualizing term that in the voice of a mother might be translated as "sweet little girl." Mākandika's wife, unlike her husband, appears to be wary of treating their daughter as a sexualized commodity.

As for the Buddha, he speaks "repellent words" to Mākandika's daughter to demonstrate his detachment from sense pleasures and to try to cultivate the same in her. Whereas Mākandika was swayed by the beauty of the Buddha, the Buddha explains that he is not swayed by the sight of Mākandika's daughter. He has a different nature, and this yields a different response.[30]

This story, with its paired motifs of *prasāda* and its perversion, is reminiscent of an episode from Maxim Gorky's childhood when he *inappropriately* kissed a miracle-working image of the virgin. As Gorky (cited in Freedberg 1989: 320) notes, "She'll probably cause my arms to wither for carrying her with dirty hands. I loved the Virgin . . . and when the time came to kiss her, I tremblingly pressed my lips to her mouth, not noticing how the grownups did it. Someone's strong arm hurled me into the corner by the door . . . You simpleton! said my master in a mild rebuke . . . For several days I waited like one condemned. First I had grasped the Virgin with dirty hands, then I had kissed her in the wrong way . . . But apparently the Virgin forgave my involuntary sin."

"He behaved to her," David Freedberg (1989: 320) notes, "impetuously and immaturely—as if she were some mortal woman, of the kind he knew, and not as some divine unknowable being. To her and not to it. Gorky's sin consisted in acting spontaneously on that basis." Yet the sin, as Gorky notes, was "involuntary." Considering that the Virgin was "the most beautiful of all women on earth" (Freedberg 1989: 320), Gorky's mistake was understandable. Nevertheless, his confusion between spiritual love and erotic love merited a strong-armed response.[31]

Gorky's response to the virgin is not unlike Mākandika's response to the Buddha. Though the object is supposed to instill *prasāda* and not erotic desire, the power and beauty of the object can stimulate an improper, libidinal response. To use Jean-François Lyotard's language, it is as though one engages with such objects primarily in the figural realm—that realm in which "meaning is not

produced and communicated, but intensities are felt" (Carrol 1987: 31). Yet these intensities are then registered and responded to in a discursive realm, and this happens as though by default, without any conscious decision-making.

Though the experience of *prasāda* is represented as routine, in the sense of habitual and predictable, it is not routine in the sense of mundane or commonplace. The experience of *prasāda* is mesmerizing. This is most apparent in the recurring epithet "sights one never tires of seeing" (*asecanakadarśana*), which I discussed in chapter 3. In this category of objects, the Buddha's visage is grouped together with mighty elephants, oceans, and rocky mountains—objects that often engender emotional responses such as awe and amazement. In the *Saṅgharakṣita-avadāna*, for example, after the venerable Saṅgharakṣita begins to look at the ocean, he is transfixed. He remains staring at the ocean, though it serves no ulterior motive but an autotelic enjoyment.[32] Finally, "in the last watch of the night, he is overcome by exhaustion and falls asleep."[33] As I mentioned previously, during the experience of *prasāda* one is not "acting with purpose." One is, so to speak, carried along.

As a result of this mesmeric quality of the experience of *prasāda* and its resultant lack of mental intermediation, these different responses to *prāsādika* objects involve an immediate and tactile grasping, and hence a sensory and corporeal aesthetics. While a libidinal response to a *prāsādika* object entails an explicit erotics, the canonically correct response of ritual giving involves a more subtle erotics. The immediacy of the arising of *prasāda*, the result of this lack of mental intermediation, generates an erotic quality.[34]

In discussing visual practices in postcolonial India, Christopher Pinney makes much the same claim. As Pinney (2002: 361) writes,

> Within film, chromolithography, and studio photography one can trace parallel movements which involved the abolition of the space of contemplation and the intensification of an erotic tactility . . . Contemplation—which was promulgated in India through colonial Arts Schools from the mid 1850s onward—might be seen as concerned with "hermeneutics" in Sontag's terms, its abolition allowing the emergence of a new "erotics."[35]

It is this "new" erotics, this *interested* aesthetics, as opposed to Kant's disinterested variety, that Pinney terms "corpothetics."

Once again, a comparison with pornography is instructive, for there seems to be a similar aesthetics—or corpothetics—involved in visually engaging with *prāsādika* objects and watching certain enunciative spectacles in pornographic films. And what is crucial about this analogy is the similarity of function of these two phenomena.

In her discussion of stag films Linda Williams (1989: 71) distinguishes between the narratives of such films and the extranarrative enunciative spectacles that occur "when the bodies within the frame come so close that their means of relation is no longer looking but touching." Explaining the tactile effect of such images, she writes, "It is, in short, as if the spectacle of the naked or nearly naked body . . . retards any possible forward narrative drive. It seems in effect to be saying, 'Let's just feast our eyes and arrest our gaze on the hidden things that ordinary vision . . . cannot see . . . who needs more" (1989: 71)? It is these images, she claims, that "seek to move us" (1989: 285).

If Williams is right, part of the power of pornographic films is that the intended function is effected not through the narratives of the films but through such extranarrative spectacles. According to Williams, this distinction between "narrative" and "number," between story and tableau, is a common trait of both pornographic films and movie musicals (1989: 130–134). But as is clear from Williams' account—and this is crucial—narration can be an *impediment* to the function. The central function of pornographic films is arousal, and this is effected through their spectacles not their stories.[36] In Lyotard's terminology, it is not a discursive process but a figural one.

The Extranarrative Function of Avadānas

All this raises some intriguing possibilities about the function of avadānas. The viewer of *prāsādika* objects, like the viewer of pornographic spectacles, views images whose function is less to communicate than to arouse, and this function is effected naturally, effortlessly, and automatically, or so it seems. But the listener of avadānas (or, more recently, the reader) is also confronted with similar extranarrative enunciative spectacles that "retard any possible forward narrative drive." This happens, for example, during *prasāda* episodes, wherein characters in the story and outside listeners alike experience a narrative pause. Occasionally these excursuses from the narrative are also extended, such as when they contain stereotyped descriptions of the Buddha's physical form.

As I mentioned previously, one particular stereotyped description of the Buddha occurs a number of times immediately after a character sees the Buddha and immediately before he develops *prasāda*. The Buddha is envisioned as one

> who is adorned with the thirty-two marks of a great man,
> whose body is radiant with the eighty minor marks,
> who is adorned with a halo extending an arm's length,

whose brilliance is greater than a thousand suns,
and who, like a mountain of jewels that moves,
is beautiful from every side.

This trope functions as a kind of description of the content of the *prasāda* experience. Put another way, this description is a discursive reading of a figural encounter—a moment, as it were, of the sublime put into words.

Such extranarrative interruptions also occur outside of the discourse of *prasāda*. Most notably, there are various stock descriptions of the powers and attributes of buddhas[37] and a stereotyped description of the qualities of arhats.[38] Many of these descriptions occur frequently and as such are often abbreviated with a cursory "and so on as before" (*pūrvavat yāvat*).[39] The most common of these stereotypical descriptions is a tenfold list of characteristics applied to buddhas. Generally, after an introduction explaining that in the past there arose in the world a particular buddha, this list occurs as an enumeration of his attributes.[40]

But this list also occurs in a different stereotyped passage, immediately after it is said that "the Blessed One is just like this—."[41] As I discussed in chapter 4, the *Cakravartivyākṛta-avadāna* shows that this list of epithets is not the content of the *prasāda* experience, as the previously mentioned list seems to have been, but the content of the meditative practice known as *buddhānusmṛti*. The Pali materials also state this more explicitly.[42]

And so, my point: since some of these stereotyped descriptions function explicitly as objects of contemplation outside of the larger narratives in which they are embedded, perhaps some of these other stereotyped descriptions—all of which, it should be noted, describe *prāsādika* objects—also function as nonnarrative enunciative spectacles. These are "image-texts" (Mitchell 1994: 89) with an iconic force that resists a discursive reading, but they are not extraneous to the message of their stories. Perhaps, in some sense, they are the message itself.

My sense is that there are different but complementary functions in the narrative and extranarrative components of these stories. The former is more legalistic, didactic, and discursive, and the latter is more impressionistic, contemplative, and figural. More loosely, the former seeks to teach us, and the latter, like the pornographic image, "seeks to move us."

Giving, Gold, and Status

Though thousands of people are said to have gone to the Toyikā site and been moved to make a variety of offerings, it isn't clear what benefit these offerings yield. What does one gain from acting on the reflex to give?

In the Toyikā story, people first come to the Toyikā site to see the undisturbed body of the perfectly awakened Kāśyapa and are upset when that isn't possible. Then, "so that they wouldn't have any regrets," the Buddha utters the following verse.

Hundreds of thousands of gold coins or ornaments
are not equal to the wise man, *prasāda* in mind,
who walks around shrines of a buddha.

As we've seen, this verse is then followed by a sequence in which individuals make a variety of offerings and the Buddha recites similar verses about the status of such offerings. Within the logic of the story, the characters appear to be making offerings to find out how much merit will be accrued from making different types of offerings rather than actually to accrue that merit. By contrast, the Buddha seems to be intent on making it clear that a variety of offerings all yield value, as long as one is *prasāda* in mind.

The verses that the Buddha recites, however, are perhaps unexpected in their meaning. The text says that such quantities of gold "are not equal to he who"[43] makes such-and-such an offering. I take this to mean that a person who is *prasāda* in mind and makes certain offerings at shrines of a buddha is more valuable than vast quantities of gold. One would need to take numerous liberties with Sanskrit grammar to construe this verse as meaning that offerings of vast quantities of gold are not equal to offerings of much lesser market value (e.g., lumps of clay) if the latter is made by someone who is *prasāda* in mind. If my interpretation is correct, the question then becomes what it means to say that someone is more valuable than vast quantities of gold or, as it is said in the version of the story in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*, more valuable than "hundreds of thousands of mountains of gold, each equal to Mount Meru."[44]

One interpretation of this equation relies on the idea of the gold standard of the karmic system. If a vast quantity of gold is indicative of a vast quantity of merit, then perhaps the idea here is that being *prasāda* in mind and then making an offering at a shrine of a buddha *results in* large quantities of merit. Shrines of a buddha, it could be argued, are such large fields of merit that even meager offerings at these sites can yield great results.

It is also possible to read the value in question in terms of social status. In chapter 3, I discussed how giving improves not only one's karmic status but also one's social status, for giving generates merit and leads to prosperity. Conversely, one's wealth is indicative of these forms of status. Giving, in other words, leads to religious and social capital, and good fortune—be it spiritual, financial, or political—is a sign of just such capital. According to this rationale, practitioners who perform certain acts of giving at the Toyikā site could be said

to earn religious capital—which the text refers to as "merit"—as well as social capital. By accruing these forms of capital, they become more valuable and worthy in society, and this value and worth are given a great price in terms of the preferred hard currency of the day—gold.

The claim that giving leads to social status is hardly new. Paul Veyne, for example, in his work on euergetism in ancient Rome during the Hellenistic and Roman periods (~300 BCE–300 CE), describes in detail how acts of public patronage were a crucial way for notables to express their membership in the upper class, and by doing so prime themselves for political careers and a certain "prestige" (1990: 122–124). Elsewhere, as well, Veyne discusses the connection between giving and the Aristotelian notion of "magnificence" (1990: 13–18) and royal "majesty" (1990: 380). Within a South Asian context, R. A. L. H. Gunawardana (1981: 136) likewise claims that the earliest Brāhmī inscriptions in Sri Lanka, most of which were to the Buddhist monastic community, "reflect a state of intense competition for status conducted through acts of conspicuous generosity."

Yet the kinds of offerings that are represented as being offered during the practice of *prasāda* are not *conspicuously* generous. They are not the luxury goods, as it has been argued, that were designated for use in Buddhist rituals (Liu 1988: 88–102), and as objects they don't share in an obvious "magnificence" or "majesty." They are the surplus of a more mundane existence.

What makes the practice of *prasāda* at Toyikā story so interesting is that it allows those who are not wealthy merchants, those with little material means at their disposal, to engage in the activities of offering gifts and pursuing status. The text is explicit that this process works with regard to karmic status—consider the case of the beggar in the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna* whose *prasāda*-initiated gift of some rice water to the noble Mahākāśyapa earns her sufficient merit to be reborn among the Tuṣita gods. Yet the connection in the text between karmic status and social status is less clear. After the beggar in the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna* is reborn as a god, for example, "word spread all around"[45] about this event. Hearing this news, King Prasenajit then goes to the Buddha and attempts to emulate the beggar woman's act of giving and presumably receive a similar reward. The message here is that the practice of *prasāda* leads one to a state of being that even kings desire—and, at least in this case, can't attain.

The claim of the text is that Buddhism can help one convert religious capital into social capital, or the converse, and it offers a fantastic rate of return that allows small offerings to generate great rewards. The goal of such claims to convertibility was surely to increase donations and combat donor fatigue, but my suspicion is that there were naysayers. Much like the incredulous brahman

in the *Brāhmaṇadārikā-avadāna* who doesn't believe the Buddha's prediction that small offerings can lead to great karmic results, did small offerings really lead to great *social* results? Did Buddhism as an institution have sufficient social capital to lend itself to any significant status claims, particularly for the kind of meager gifts associated with the practice of *prasāda*?

It may be instructive in this regard to consider Marcus Banks's account of the donor fatigue among Srimali Jains in Leicester, England and the fortunes of the Jain Centre there. In the words of Banks (1991: 245), "It is a 'failure' for the Leicester Srimalis as they no longer see gifts made to . . . [the Jain Centre in Leicester] as Maussian 'gifts to god' and the symbolic capital they accrue by gifting is valueless to them—where is the prestige for a British Telecom Worker in being associated with an international meditation centre?" Did Indian Buddhists face a similar struggle with regard to the practice of *prasāda*? Was the prestige of Buddhism so great that a beggar could offer some rice water and achieve significant social mobility through that act?

Stages of Faith and Issues of Agency

Although there is no mention in the *Divyāvadāna* of faith coming in stages, my sense is that *prasāda* was understood as a preparatory state that initiated one's development as a Buddhist but was meant to be supplemented, if not superseded, by additional stages of faith. Some sense of these stages can be inferred from the definition of *śraddhā* in the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, a text attributed to the fourth-century philosopher Asaṅga:

> What are the forms of *śraddhā*? It is *conviction* in what is real, *prasāda* regarding that which has virtuous qualities, and *longing* for what is possible. It has the function of providing a basis for will.[46] (emphasis added)

Here *śraddhā* is conceived of as an encompassing term for three forms of faith: (1) *abhisaṃpratyaya*, (2) *prasāda*, and (3) *abhilāṣa*. In his commentary on this passage, Sthiramati, a sixth-century scholastic, offers this gloss: "*śraddhā* has [1] the form of conviction in what is the case. It has [2] the form of *prasāda* concerning the good qualities possessed [by the three jewels]. And it has [3] the form of yearning for what is possible, as when one thinks 'I can obtain it' or 'I can make it so.' "[47]

Now what is the relationship between these elements? Judging by a similar commentary on this passage in the eighteenth-century Tibetan text entitled *The Necklace of Clear Understanding: An Elucidation of the System of Mind and*

Mental States (*Sems dang sems byung gi tshul gsal bar ston pa blo gsal mgul rgyan*),[48] these three mental states represent a progression, a sequence of spiritual development. In this text, however, the order is (1) *prasāda*, (2) *abhisaṃpratyaya*, and then (3) *adhimukti*, a common replacement in the scholastic tradition for *abhilāṣa*.[49] Regardless of the precise ordering and terminology, what is important with regard to the issues in this book is that there is a progression, a sense of *stages* of faith, and that *prasāda* represents an early one.

In this lineage of scholarship, *prasāda* is a state of mental clarity in which mental disturbances are quieted. It is thus a state of "inspired clarity," as Dunne and Apple translate the term, with regard to "that which has virtuous qualities"—namely, the three jewels: the Buddha, the dharma, and the monastic community. *The Necklace of Clear Understanding* makes clear that *prasāda* provides one with the mental clarity that allows one to develop *abhisaṃpratyaya*. Without the clarity of *prasāda*, most individuals cannot think clearly enough to develop *abhisaṃpratyaya*. *Abhisaṃpratyaya* is a "conviction" or "trusting confidence" in the fact that certain things are the case, that certain claims are true. Basically *abhisaṃpratyaya* entails a reasoned acceptance of the most fundamental Buddhist truths. The Tibetan commentary cites interdependent arising (*pratītyasamutpāda*), which is a common example. The process of generating such faith involves examining the Buddha's teachings and realizing through reasoning that what he has said is true. *Abhilāṣa* or *adhimukti* is a "longing" or "yearning" to become like the objects in which one has faith (i.e., the three jewels), and it is based on realizing that one can indeed become like them. It thus presupposes *abhisaṃpratyaya*, for in the context of developing *abhisaṃpratyaya* one realizes it is possible to become a buddha.

One might imagine this sequence in a scenario such as this: An individual sees a stūpa, and then *prasāda* arises in him, along with a sense of mental clarity and tranquility, and an urge to give. This experience of *prasāda* is relatively passive, for it is the *prasāda*-inducing powers of the stūpa that generates faith in the individual, tilling his field of merit so that roots of virtue can be planted. With the arising of *prasāda*, the individual then becomes an active agent in his development as a Buddhist. He studies the Buddha's teachings and comes to a "conviction" (*abhisaṃpratyaya*) that at a fundamental level they are true. He does not yet have a full realization of the four noble truths, but he grasps the truth of teachings such as interdependent arising and karma. He further understands that, according to these basic principles, he too can become like the Buddha. His experiences of inspired clarity and his study of the Buddha's teaching have led him to greatly admire the Buddha. Hence, now that he knows that he can become buddha-like, his admiration engenders a "longing" to become a buddha.

This third stage of "longing" is well represented in various jātakas and, indeed, in the *Divyāvadāna* itself. There are numerous accounts of bodhisattvas who, yearning to become buddhas, perform exceptionally difficult deeds in pursuit of this goal, like sacrificing one's body to feed a starving beast.[50] In the end, this is a longing for nirvāṇa, not just for a better rebirth, as with *prasāda*-initiated action. This bifurcation calls to mind Spiro's distinction between nibbanic and kammatic Buddhism, as well as the soteriological limits of the moral economy that kammatic Buddhism entails.

This emphasis on the heroic agency of the bodhisattva, and the trying deeds that he must perform, contrasts with the distinctively nonheroic agency of those in whom faith is shown to have just arisen. For *prasāda* to arise in an individual, he or she need not exert oneself physically, mentally, or spiritually. Simply catching sight of a buddha image or a shrine—or perhaps even a spiritually advanced monk (Mrozik 2007: 73–76)—is sufficient. One need not even be aware of the arising of *prasāda*. The exigencies of *prasāda* and the actions it engenders are sufficient to start one on the Buddhist path, even if one is not cognizant of faith's arising or its great rewards. Only later, as the text explains, "after striving, struggling, and straining,"[51] can one come to experience arhatship.

This formulation of *prasāda* undermines the fantasy of sovereign, imperial, or heroic consciousness in agency, and in doing so offers a glimpse into the ways that power uses people, not just the converse.[52] Characters in the *Divyāvadāna* are not fully sovereign subjects, and it is soteriologically important that they aren't. As I mentioned previously, faith is represented as a karmic intervention, an outside force that generates thought and action, and as such it provides individuals a means to create for themselves a new existence and a better destiny. With faith, individuals can act *as* Buddhists and *in* the Buddhist moral economy, and the outside agency of *prasāda*-initiated action ensures that it will be performed with the right intention, circumventing any possible base inclinations or motives.

But what are the ethical implications of a system in which one becomes a Buddhist and first acts as a Buddhist with little self-consciousness or choice? In the conclusion to *Becoming Sinners: Christianity and Moral Torment in a Papua New Guinea Society*, Joel Robbins (2004: 315) offers this assessment of the ethical field: "Having defined the moral domain as one in which actors are culturally constructed as being aware both of the directive force of values and of the choices left open to them in responding to that force, we have to recognize that it is fundamentally a domain that consists of action undertaken consciously . . . The ethical field cannot be governed by unconscious cultural compulsion."

Yet the practice of *prasāda* is governed by just such a compulsion. It is impersonal, in that it is prompted by an outside agent, and seemingly amoral,

for it is outside the domain of moral choice. Such a depiction of the awakening of faith challenges the idea of the newly minted Buddhist as an autonomous subject, as well as the normativity of the heroic agency found in stories of the bodhisattva. The discourse of *prasāda* is more about negotiating and accommodating the power of others then asserting one's own, and as such requires a conception of the Buddhist ethical field that understands the limitations of personal and practical sovereignty.

This configuration of *prasāda*, with its reliance on a nonheroic human agency, well serves a public that is poor, in terms of both merit and money. While according to karma theory, one reaps what one sows, and as such is in control of one's life and destiny, it is this population, the disenfranchised and disempowered, that has the most difficulty maintaining control of its survival. The bull in the *Aśokavarṇa-avadāna* is about to be butchered. The king in the *Kanakavarṇa-avadāna* is about to starve. The leprous beggar woman in the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna* is in pain with rotten limbs. Though struggling to endure, they needn't worry about mustering the courage, resolve, and determination of the bodhisattva to embark on the Buddhist path. These characters may be karmically responsible for their suffering, but they are not responsible for the faith that will help them escape it. *Prasāda* is a wonderful refuge for the powerless.

PART III

Seeing the Buddha

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7

Past and Present

What the mind takes in through the ears stimulates it less effectively than what is presented to it through the eyes and what the spectator can believe and see for himself.

—Horace, *Ars Poetics*

As I mentioned in previous chapters on *śraddhā* and *prasāda*, stories of the character Vakkali in Pali literature emphasize that too strong a desire to see the Buddha can be an impediment to karmic development, and that karmic development is not contingent upon seeing the Buddha. As the Buddha himself remarks, "Whoever sees the dhamma, Vakkali, sees me, and whoever sees me sees the dhamma."[1]

In Pali materials, it is the first half of this aphorism that tends to be emphasized. In the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*,[2] the sick and bedridden Vakkali acknowledges to the Buddha that he has long desired to see him, and the Buddha chastises him, explaining that his own physical form is foul. He then tries to convince Vakkali of the impermanence of matter (*rūpa*) and the remaining four aggregates (*khanda*)—feeling (*vedanā*), recognition (*saññā*), conditioning (*saṅkhāra*), and consciousness (*viññāna*). In other words, the Buddha tries to persuade him—to rework the above aphorism—that seeing the dhamma is helpful for escaping the suffering of conditioned existence and seeing the Buddha is not.[3]

The *Divyāvadāna*, by contrast, emphasizes the second half of the above aphorism.[4] In the *Pūrṇa-avadāna*, following the familiar *prasāda* paradigm, a seer named Vakkalin (Pali, Vakkali) looks down from Mount Musalaka, where he resides, and sees the Buddha. "As soon as he sees him, his mind becomes filled with *prasāda* in the presence of the Blessed One."[5] Filled with *prasāda*, Vakkalin decides to descend the mountain and approach the Blessed One for his *darśana*, but he fears that the Buddha will pass him by in his search for new disciples. So he flings himself off the mountain. The Buddha, always alert, makes use of his magical powers and catches him. He then gives Vakkalin a discourse on the dharma, and when the latter hears it, he directly experiences the result of the non-returner. The Buddha then ordains Vakkalin and explains, "Monks, this monk Vakkalin is foremost among my monks who are ardently devoted in their *śraddhā* to me."[6]

In the ardor of his *śraddhā* and/or *prasāda*, Vakkalin flings himself off a mountain to catch the Buddha's attention and, presumably, offer himself as a new disciple, dead or alive. Yet, no mention is made of any negative qualities that Vakkalin may have had, nor is there any condemnation of his intense desire to see the Buddha's physical form. In what precedes this Vakkalin narrative in the *Pūrṇa-avadāna*, as the Buddha along with the monastic community are flying to the city of Sūrpāraka, the efficacy of seeing the Buddha is repeatedly validated. Five hundred women see the Buddha, *prasāda* arises in them, and they eventually attain the result of the stream-enterer. Then five hundred seers see the Buddha, *prasāda* arises in them, and they eventually attain arhatship. In both of these cases, and in the case of Vakkalin, the *prasāda* paradigm is affirmed, and hence the workings and power of *śraddhā* and *prasāda* are shown to be interconnected.

Unlike the Vakkali story in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*, here what is emphasized as being karmically efficacious is not grasping the Buddha's "dharmic form" (*dharmakāya*)—the Buddha's teachings or, as it were, the Buddha embodied in the dharma—but seeing the Buddha's "physical form" (*rūpakāya*)—his human, corporeal body.[7] To a certain extent, seeing the Buddha is seeing the dharma, but put more accurately for characters such as these women and seers, seeing the Buddha is an efficient means for seeing the dharma. And this is affirmed again and again in the text.

Throughout the *Divyāvadāna*, seeing the appropriate objects is represented as transformative, whether they be "indirect objects" that allow for the cultivation of *śraddhā*, or *prāsādika* objects that engender *prasāda*. But seeing the Buddha in his physical form is a trope so powerful and prevalent that it exceeds the confines of the discourses of *śraddhā* and *prasāda*. It is a practical and theological impulse that permeates these stories and characterizes the visual world of the text.

In what follows, I will examine some other instances in the *Divyāvadāna* of seeing the Buddha, offering more examples of visual tropes in an effort to thematize the visual world of the text more broadly. First I will consider what monastics say about seeing the Buddha and what they do when confronted with such an opportunity, and then I will discuss how one sees the Buddha after his final nirvāṇa, focusing specifically on the various mechanisms that allow for this to happen.

Seeing the Buddha: The *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* Reconsidered

"In certain avadāna texts," John Strong (1979a: 225) explains, "'wisdom' (i.e., a vision of the Buddha's *dharmakāya*) was not thought to be enough, even for a monk. A total experience of the Buddha necessitated a vision of his *rūpakāya* as well." For the assortment of characters in the *Divyāvadāna*, however, this assessment needs to be slightly revised.

Laypeople in the *Divyāvadāna* are frequently represented as seeing the Buddha's physical form first and his dharmic form afterward—such is the logic of *prasāda* paradigm. For characters such as those women and seers in the *Pūrṇa-avadāna*, seeing the Buddha's physical form is a crucial impetus for their karmic development, and a necessary precursor to their hearing (and seeing) the Buddha's dharmic form. For others, such as the bull in the *Aśokavarṇa-avadāna* and the brahman in the *Stutibrāhmaṇa-avadāna*, seeing the Buddha's physical form is all that is necessary to begin traveling down the path to solitary buddhahood. A vision of the dharma will come in the future, but seeing the Buddha's physical form is the point of departure.

The converse of this chronology of events, to which Strong refers, is apparent in examples concerning monastics—but only monastics, at least in the *Divyāvadāna*. Hence, I would remove the word "even" from Strong's remarks. This modification, though, is more than a quibble. Here too, as with the practice of *prasāda*, monastics and laypeople are represented as engaging in different activities, and such differences may imply, if not signify, some differences or desired differences in regard to the real-world performance of cultic practices. I will return to this point in chapter 8.

The example that Strong uses to illustrate his claim—which, following my modification, pertains to monks alone—comes from the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*. We now return to the story from where I left off in chapter 2.

After Koṭikarṇa delivers the messages that he has received to the butcher, adulterer, and prostitute, he goes forth as a monk in the Buddhist order. Under the guidance of the venerable Mahākātyāyana, he learns the full corpus of

Buddhist teachings and directly experiences arhatship. Meanwhile, the students and pupils of Mahākātyāyana go to him and say, "We have seen you and paid our respects to you, our instructor. Now we'll go and pay our respects to the Blessed One."[8] Mahākātyāyana consents, explaining that "perfectly awakened tathāgata arhats are certainly to be seen and certainly to be offered respect."[9] Thereafter, Koṭikarṇa joins Mahākātyāyana's assembly and likewise addresses him: "Thanks to you, my instructor, I have seen the Blessed One through his dharmic form but not through his physical form. I too am going, my instructor. I shall see the Blessed One through his physical form as well."[10] Mahākātyāyana agrees that he should go, "for it is as difficult to get a glimpse of perfectly awakened tathāgata arhats, my child, as it is of a flower from an *udumbara* tree."[11] Mahākātyāyana also asks Koṭikarṇa to ask the Buddha five questions, on his behalf, regarding monastic rules in the regions of Aśmāparāntaka.

Koṭikarṇa then makes his way to Śrāvastī and approaches the Buddha. The Buddha, in turn, asks Ānanda to prepare seats for him and Koṭikarṇa in the same building. The Buddha then enters the building, sits down, and makes his awareness fully present. Koṭikarṇa soon follows and does likewise, and the two of them "pass the night together in noble silence."[12] At daybreak, the Buddha finally addresses Koṭikarṇa:

> "Śroṇa, may the dharma that I myself have fully known, understood, and expressed inspire you to recite."
>
> Given the opportunity by the Blessed One, the venerable Śroṇa, following the Aśmāparāntaka intonation, recited passages at length and out loud from *The Inspired Utterances* (*Udāna*), *The Farther Shore* (*Pārāyaṇa*), and *Discerning the Truth* (*Satyadṛś*), as well as *The Verses of Śaila* (*Śailagāthā*), *The Sage's Verses* (*Munigāthā*), and *Discourses Concerning the Goal* (*Arthavargīya Sūtras*).[13] When the Blessed One was sure that Śroṇa Koṭikarṇa had finished his recitation, he said this to the venerable Śroṇa Koṭikarṇa: "Excellent! Excellent, Śroṇa! Sweet is the dharma that you have spoken and presented! It is that which I myself have fully known, understood, and expressed."[14]

In the above passage, the initiates of Mahākātyāyana, having seen and paid their respects to their teacher, desire to do the same with regard to the Buddha. Likewise, Koṭikarṇa, having seen the Buddha's dharmic form under Mahākātyāyana's instruction, desires to see the Buddha's physical form before his eyes. Mahākātyāyana's response in each case indicates that these are normative progressions, for he readily agrees that buddhas are to be seen and offered respect and that one should take advantage of the rare opportunity of

doing so. There is no sense here, as in the Pali versions of the Vakkali story, that the Buddha's physical form is foul. Here it is something that even the venerable Mahākātyāyana agrees should be seen and respected.

Yet, although Mahākātyāyana has said that seeing the Buddha's physical form is a worthy ambition, the power of this sight does not figure actively in the narrative that follows. Even attaining a holistic vision of the Buddha's physical and dharmic forms does not seem to be particularly transformative for Koṭikarṇa. Instead, seeing the Buddha is an occasion for affirming the truth of the vision that Koṭikarṇa already has had of the Buddha's dharmic form. It is a moment for validating a particular concatenation of the Buddha's teachings.

When Koṭikarṇa meets the Buddha, no mention is made of him ever looking at, contemplating, or being moved by the Buddha's physical form. Rather, without either of them speaking a word, they spend the night together meditating. At dawn, the Buddha expresses his hope that the dharma he has understood and expressed shall give Koṭikarṇa the inspiration to recite the dharma as well. In response, Koṭikarṇa recites a number of texts, and then the Buddha exclaims that these very texts are the dharma that he himself has understood and expressed. In other words, thanks to Mahākātyāyana's instruction, Koṭikarṇa has correctly seen the dharmic form of the Buddha, and just like the Buddha he has "fully known, understood, and expressed" the true dharma. This represents not only a lineage of teachers who have seen, known, and expounded the true dharma (i.e., the Buddha, Mahākātyāyana, Koṭikarṇa), but also an authorization of what constitutes the Buddha's dharmic form.

Seeing the Buddha is valuable for Koṭikarṇa not in the sense that it is a karmically transformative experience but because it allows Koṭikarṇa to meet the Buddha, and on that occasion, to have a set of what are presumably Mūlasarvāstivādin texts affirmed as the word of the Buddha,[15] to have the Aśmāparāntaka style of recitation legitimized, and later to have a set of monastic regulations for that region sanctioned.[16] But why is seeing the Buddha's physical form at first raised as a normative desire and practice, and then dropped for a discourse on the shape and importance of his dharmic form?

Answering this question in full requires that one first address other difficult questions: To what extent is the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* an assemblage of narrative fragments taken from previous versions of the story? What was the author's intention in recasting and adding to these fragments? Addressing these questions, however difficult, offers a useful starting point for determining what was at stake in crafting this particular version of the story. In this regard, it is worth noting the similarities and differences between the Koṭikarṇa story in the *Divyāvadāna* and its counterpart in the Pali *Vinaya*.[17]

The version of this story in the Pali *Vinaya* begins with the main character Kuṭikaṇṇa (Skt., Koṭikarṇa) deciding to go forth as a monk under the venerable Mahākaccāna (Skt., Mahākātyāyana). Three times Kuṭikaṇṇa requests Mahākaccāna for his permission, and three times Mahākaccāna explains the hardships of the monastic life. Finally, he acquiesces to Kuṭikaṇṇa's request. Three years later, after a quorum of monks is finally organized to confer the higher ordination on Kuṭikaṇṇa, Kuṭikaṇṇa decides that he would like to go and see the Blessed One. As Kuṭikaṇṇa explains, "Indeed I have heard that the Blessed One is like this and like that, but I have not seen him face to face. Bhante, I'd like to go and see the Blessed One—that arhat, that perfectly awakened buddha—that is, if my instructor allows me."[18] Mahākaccāna consents, expressing his enthusiasm for Kuṭikaṇṇa's decision, and says, "You shall see, Soṇa [Skt., Śroṇa], that the Blessed One instills *pasāda*, is worthy of *pasāda*,"[19] and is in other ways calm and gifted. Kuṭikaṇṇa then goes to the Buddha. They pass the night together, and then in the morning the Buddha says to Kuṭikaṇṇa, "Monk, may the dhamma appear to you so that it may be spoken."[20] Kuṭikaṇṇa then recites the *Aṭṭhaka-vaggikāni* ("The Book of Eights"), and following this, asks more or less the same five questions about monastic rules that are preserved in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*.

Much like the Koṭikarṇa story in the *Divyāvadāna*, what begins as a desire to see the Buddha's physical form develops into an occasion for authorizing certain texts. While the story mentions the idea of the Buddha as a purveyor of *pasāda*, it does not show *pasāda* to arise at his sight. Moreover, no mention is made of seeing the Buddha through his various forms.[21] Other versions of the Koṭikarṇa story in other vinayas also have Koṭikarṇa expressing a wish to see the Buddha and then an episode in which he recites a number of texts to confirm their canonical status, but—excluding the version in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* that is nearly identical to the one in the *Divyāvadāna*—the theme of the various forms of the Buddha doesn't appear to be developed elsewhere.[22]

Setting aside the notion in the Pali version of the Vakkali story that the Buddha's physical body is foul—for as we know, texts can and do embody contradictions—the idea that monastics want to see the Buddha and should be able to do so is sanctioned across numerous Buddhist traditions. The Koṭikarṇa story offers a narrative template that relies on this trope to sanction particular texts. What distinguishes the version in the *Divyāvadāna* (and its nearly identical twin in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*) from the others is, as I have already mentioned, the various forms of the Buddha and their implicit connection. Yet, even in a tradition that emphasizes visually engaging with the Buddha, monks are not represented as having a karmically transformative experience from such an engagement. Seeing the Buddha's physical form is clearly crucial—crucial

enough, presumably, to have been added to the mix—but the trope is not reconstituted to have Koṭikarṇa or his fellow monastics actively engage with the Buddha as a visual object or respond with pleasure at his sight.

So what does all this mean? Seeing the Buddha is shown to be important for monastics not because his physical form functions as a powerful visual object, such as one of the *prāsādika* variety, nor because this act allows for what John Strong refers to as a "total experience of the Buddha," as though seeing the Buddha's dharmic form plus seeing the Buddha's physical form equals some form of release or sublime satisfaction. Instead, seeing the Buddha is shown here to be an occasion for his authorizing presence. In short, seeing the Buddha's dharmic form is followed by seeing the Buddha's physical form, at which time the Buddha himself can authorize the truth of that first vision. Seeing is efficacious here as well, but the object of sight has an *authorizing* not an *activating* presence.

Seeing the Buddha after His Final Nirvāṇa

Regardless of how the *Divyāvadāna* represents laypeople and monastics as thinking about and engaging with the physical form of the Buddha, the text also narrativizes a time period after the Buddha's death when such direct encounters are no longer possible. For what does one do after the Buddha's physical body has been cremated and the desire to see his physical form arises? How can one engage with the Buddha's physical form if it is no more than ash and bones ensconced in various stūpas? The Toyikā story offers a partial answer to this question. It suggests, as I discussed in chapter 5, that seeing a buddha who has passed into final nirvāṇa and seeing a living buddha function in the same way for cultivating *prasāda*. One might assume, then, that seeing a former buddha's remains or a shrine that a buddha has activated is functionally equivalent to seeing a living buddha.

Other accounts, however, offer a more nuanced description of how to see the Buddha's physical form, and in doing so offer insight into what other objects might have functioned as "agents of *prasāda*" and why such a discourse might have been important to disseminate. This also leads to some important historical questions about the promotion of pilgrimage.

More specifically, in what follows I will discuss two accounts that offer responses to these questions. The first occurs in the *Kunāla-avadāna*, which is the second[23] in a cycle of four avadānas in the *Divyāvadāna* that narrate the legend of King Aśoka. In this avadāna, King Aśoka goes on a pilgrimage with the monk Upagupta to sites associated with the life of the Buddha, then to sites

associated with the Buddha's chief disciples, and finally to meet the disciple Piṇḍola Bharadvāja, who had been an eyewitness to many of the Buddha's great deeds. The second response occurs in the *Pāṃśupradāna-avadāna*, the first avadāna in the Aśoka cycle. In this case, after Upagupta conquers and converts the evil Māra, he requests Māra to manifest the physical form of the Buddha, a sight he has never seen before, for the Buddha had passed into final nirvāṇa one hundred years before Upagupta's birth.[24]

Aśoka's Pilgrimage

The story of Aśoka's pilgrimage provides an interesting case study in visual piety, for as a king, Aśoka is neither a layman nor a monk, but a special class of being who follows a unique dharma. The rules of conduct for a king, particularly a *cakravartin* king such as Aśoka, are often different from those by which the laity and monastics abide. Still, the conduct of a king is emblematic of an ethical ideal that has great social power.[25] Even if this ideal is not to be emulated directly by either the laity or monastics, for not everyone can be a world conqueror, such behavior is indicative of a moral vision that, in turn, reflects and offers insight into the often-conflicting ethos embodied in the text.[26]

Besides this difficulty of construing what insight such an ideal can offer into the intellectual and social worlds of the text, certain peculiarities in the entire Aśoka cycle of stories regarding *śraddhā, bhakti*, and *prasāda*—as I mentioned in chapter 4—complicate an analysis of Aśoka's pilgrimage experience. Nevertheless, the development in the *Kunāla-avadāna* of the trope of seeing and the experiences it engenders well complements such themes in the rest of the text. Here too it is taken for granted that characters want to see the Buddha's physical form, but in this case, characters are represented as trying to fulfill this desire in a time after the Buddha's demise. It is this problem of praxis—how to make the deceased Buddha both present and visible—that is addressed most succinctly in the story.

I will begin with a summary of a section of the story in which Aśoka confronts this problem. "Shortly after [King Aśoka] develops *prasāda* [sic] in the teachings of the Buddha,"[27] wherever he sees Buddhist monks, he falls prostrate at their feet and venerates them. When he hears of the monk Upagupta, whom he is told the Buddha predicted would be the best of instructors, he goes to meet him. At their meeting, Aśoka gazes at him, expresses the joy he feels at his sight, and remarks, "From seeing you, my *prasāda* has doubled!"[28] Aśoka then tells Upagupta that he wants to honor the places where the Blessed One lived, and Upagupta agrees to show them to him.

First on their pilgrimage is Lumbinī Grove where the Buddha was born. Once there, Aśoka remarks that those who have seen the Buddha's birth and heard his voice "are fortunate and have performed a meritorious deed."[29] Then, "for the sake of increasing the king's *prasāda*,"[30] Upagupta asks the king if he would like to see a deity who saw the Buddha's birth and heard his voice. Aśoka assents, and then Upagupta declares,

> May the divine maiden who lives here in this Aśoka tree,
> who saw the perfectly awakened Buddha with her own eyes,
> manifest her body for the increase
> of *prasāda* in the mind of King Aśoka.[31]

After the deity appears, Aśoka asks her to describe "the glory of the Blessed One being born."[32] "I cannot fully bring it to light with words,"[33] she explains, so instead she describes it briefly in verse as a luminous and earth-shaking event. Aśoka then gives one hundred thousand gold coins to the place of the Buddha's birth, has a shrine constructed there, and departs.

The next stop on their pilgrimage is Kapilavastu, where the Buddha grew up. There Upagupta shows Aśoka numerous places connected with the Buddha's life and narrates the events that occurred there. This guided tour begins at the place where the Buddha as a newborn child was brought before his father, King Śuddhodana, and continues on through more than a dozen sites until Upagupta shows Aśoka a place and explains that the nāga king Kālika had praised the Buddha there. Then Aśoka, who had been silent through the tour, remarks, "May I see this nāga chief who saw the Tathāgata?"[34] Immediately, Kālika appears, and Aśoka says,

> Recount for me some of the qualities of the Buddha.
> Friend, tell me what it was like when the Sugata was alive.[35]

Like the deity in the preceding episode, Kālika also says "I cannot fully bring it to light with words,"[36] and then briefly in verse describes the earth-shaking effects of the Buddha and his luminosity. Aśoka then has a shrine constructed there and departs.

In this section of the story, Aśoka's first step in making the absent Buddha present is in managing to see someone who had, in turn, seen the Buddha when he was alive. This creates a visual lineage that links Aśoka with the Buddha, so when Aśoka sees the deity living in the tree that is his namesake and when he sees the nāga chief Kālika, he is somehow seeing the Buddha's physical form.[37] But seeing alone is not sufficient. A verbal supplement is necessary, as in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* when Koṭikarṇa sees a city of hungry ghosts or in the *Sahasodgata-avadāna* when householders and brahmans see the wheel

of existence. Here, however, what is provided is not a verbal explanation of a visual phenomenon but a verbal creation of such a phenomenon. These are image-texts, pictures in words.[38]

Nevertheless, "the glory of the Blessed One being born" and "the qualities of the Buddha" are not phenomena that either the tree deity or Kālika are able, with words, "to fully bring to light" or "to properly illuminate" (*saṃprakāśayitum*). Their words are only partly efficacious. Though Aśoka can't *really* see the Buddha by seeing the tree deity and Kālika, and though these visual proxies can't fully conjure the Buddha through their words, a combination of seeing these visual agents and hearing their descriptions of the Buddha creates an effective multimedia experience by which the Buddha is brought to life.

I say "effective" not because of what Aśoka thinks or feels in response—for the text is silent on these matters—but because of what he does in response: he makes an offering. At the start of their pilgrimage, Upagupta remarks that seeing the tree deity will increase Aśoka's *prasāda*, and though the term is not mentioned again, perhaps the logic of *prasāda* dictates Aśoka's reactions. Seeing *prāsādika* objects leads one to give, and these experiences of seeing-and-hearing also lead one to give. In the cases of *śraddhā* and *prasāda*, giving is the marker of the efficacy of the experience. It signifies that the giver has already received something—that the giver and his counterpart have already engaged in an exchange—and I am assuming much the same here.

Yet, Aśoka makes his offerings not to the tree deity and Kālika—those who apparently gave Aśoka the gift of a multimedia experience of the Buddha—but to the sites themselves where the Buddha performed various deeds. Aśoka, for example, offers money "to the birthplace [of the Buddha]" (*jātyām*) and then has a shrine constructed there. He offers nothing to the tree deity. The agent, apparently, receives no commission.

Though it seems that the tree deity and Kālika offer Aśoka the experience of the Buddha as a gift, and then Aśoka offers counter-gifts to various third parties, my sense is that such a gift was thought to come from the Buddha-related sites themselves, though some help from various custodians was necessary for the delivery to be made. Hence, counter-gifts should be given to the sites themselves, not their custodians. Unlike the case considered in chapter 3 in which the monastic community is the de facto caretaker of all *prāsādika* objects and recipient of any counter-gifts, here the caretakers are only caretakers. After the construction of a shrine at the Buddha's birthplace, one can imagine that then, as now, any offerings received would be the property of the overseeing monastic community.

This emphasis on the venerability of the places associated with the Buddha's biography is demonstrated in Upagupta's guided tour. Again and again,

he explains that "in this place" (*asmin pradeśe*)[39] such-and-such event happened. It is as though these places that were touched by the Buddha are somehow spatial conduits to his presence, much in the same way that the tree deity and Kālika, having had *darśana* of the Buddha, are visual conduits to his presence. In each of these cases, whatever or whoever interacts with the Buddha, whether through sight or touch, remains somehow charged or activated with his presence. All this, of course, resonates with the episode in the Toyikā story, which I discussed in chapter 5, when Ānanda asks the Buddha to sit down upon "a place on the ground" so that he can make use of it and turn it into a shrine.

As the pilgrimage continues, Upagupta takes Aśoka to see the Bodhi tree, then to Ṛṣipatana, and finally to Kuśinagarī, where the Buddha passed into remainderless nirvāṇa. There, Upagupta explains,

> The great sage, wise and most compassionate,
> having trained in the imperishable dharma and vinaya
> the world with its gods, mortals, antigods, yakṣas, and nāgas,
> with his mind at ease as there were no beings left to train,
> then took rest.[40]

"Hearing this," the text continues, "the king lost consciousness and collapsed."[41] After he was revived with a splash of water to the face, he gave one hundred thousand gold coins to the site of the Buddha's final nirvāṇa and had a shrine built there.

Upagupta's description of the Buddha's final nirvāṇa has a powerful effect on Aśoka. It knocks him unconscious, and it is only after he regains consciousness that in response he offers money to the site and builds a shrine. Though Upagupta has no visual connection with the Buddha, he himself appears to be an "agent of *prasāda*," for Aśoka's *prasāda* doubled when he saw him previously. Nevertheless, it is Upagupta's words, not his visual legacy or power, that create such a catharsis in the king. The right words in the right place have a powerful effect.

Seeing, hearing, and giving—in that order—are also shown to work together as Aśoka and Upagupta continue on their pilgrimage. The two set off so that Aśoka may perform *pūjā* at the bodily relics of those disciples whom the Buddha declared to be foremost in some quality.

Upagupta brings Aśoka to the Jeta Grove, and gesturing with his right hand, he remarks, "This, great king, is the stūpa of the elder Śāriputra. Offer him/it praise."[42] Aśoka then asks what virtues Śāriputra possessed, and Upagupta explains that he was foremost of the wise, and adds in verse,

> No one in the entire world
> except the Tathāgata

has even a sixteenth
of the wisdom of Śāriputra.[43]

Then he continues,

The incomparable wheel of the true dharma
that the Victor set in motion
was kept in motion
by the learned Śāriputra.

What righteous person other than the Buddha
knows the treasury of virtues amassed
by this son of Śāradvatī here
and is able to give voice to each and every one of them?[44]

Then Aśoka, "with joy in his heart, offers one hundred thousand [gold coins] to the stūpa of the son of Śāradvatī"[45] and offers praise to his wisdom.

Next, Upagupta shows Aśoka the stūpa of Mahāmaudgalyāyana. In response to the king's query regarding this disciple's virtues, Upagupta explains that he had been foremost of those possessing magical powers. Then he adds in verse that "*pūjā* should be performed diligently"[46] for Mahāmaudgalyāyana, who caused Śakra's palace to shake, subdued two nāga kings, and possessed unfathomable virtues. Again, Aśoka offers one hundred thousand gold coins.

The same trope is then repeated at the stūpa of Mahākāśyapa, the foremost of those with few desires, but then at the stūpa of Batkula, who is foremost of those with few ailments but who never recited even a single verse, Aśoka offers only a single small coin. As Aśoka explains, this is because he was knowledgeable but "had so few desires that he didn't do that which others had done to benefit sentient beings."[47] In other words, he didn't teach.

Upagupta and Aśoka then proceed to the stūpa of Ānanda. There Upagupta explains that Ānanda was foremost of those well listened in the Buddha's teachings and a preserver of the Buddha's word. Then in verse he praises him as "an ocean of oral tradition."[48] Aśoka, in turn, offers ten million gold coins. The king's ministers then question him as to why he honors Ānanda more than the others. Aśoka explains that he does so because Ānanda preserved the pure dharmic form of the Buddha, and it is because of him that "the lamp of dharma still burns today and dispels the darkness of defilement in beings."[49]

Again the same pattern is on display. First, the pilgrim is shown a powerful site. In this case, the sites are not places where the Buddha performed some act, but stūpas of great disciples. Following the distinction I made previously, these sites are not shrines by use or memorial shrines but shrines for bodily

remains. They are reliquaries. Then, in the presence of these shrines, a description is offered. These descriptions are not unlike what one finds today on museum placards affixed next to sculptures that feature the exploits of buddhas and arhats, or what one hears from tour guides while wandering among the paintings and sculptures at Ajanta, Sanchi, Sarnath or any number of Indian museums. Finally, offerings are made, not to the guide, but to the sights/sites themselves. Again this has its modern parallels, for now such places have donation boxes next to the objects in question, as is the practice throughout much of South Asia.[50]

The story of Aśoka's pilgrimage is then interrupted for an account of Aśoka's love for the Bodhi tree, which he had visited previously with Upagupta, and the jealousy that this love mistakenly inspires in his wife, Queen Tiṣyarakṣitā. As the narrator explains,

> King Aśoka gave one hundred thousand [gold coins] to [the place of the Buddha's] birth, awakening, [setting in motion] the wheel of dharma, and final nirvāṇa. But his *prasāda* arose particularly at the Bodhi [tree]. There he thought, "Here the Blessed One perfectly awakened to unsurpassed perfect awakening!" He therefore sent to the Bodhi [tree] those jewels that were the most precious.[51]

Queen Tiṣyarakṣitā, however, assumes that her husband Aśoka is sending gifts to a woman, not a tree. "Although the king enjoys his pleasures with me," she thinks, "he sends those jewels that are most precious to Bodhi."[52] Under this misconception, she hires a sorceress to bring about Bodhi's destruction, and as this begins to occur, as the Bodhi tree begins to wither, Aśoka is distraught. As he explains, "When I look at the base of the king of trees, I know that even now I am looking at the self-made Master."[53] When Tiṣyarakṣitā comes to comfort the king, however, she realizes her error and has the spell reversed. When the tree recovers, Aśoka decides to perform "the highest honors twice"[54] and so makes offerings of jewels, foods, perfumes, and flowers.

The opening remarks indicate that Aśoka was possessed of *prasāda* in the presence of the Bodhi tree, though in the previous description of this encounter it was seeing the tree and then hearing Upagupta's words that proved effective. On that occasion, Upagupta explained that "in this place"[55] the bodhisattva defeated the evil Māra and attained unsurpassed perfect awakening. This, of course, was followed by Aśoka making an offering to the site. Here the Bodhi tree seems to be a powerful icon in its own right, for Aśoka closely identifies the Buddha with the Bodhi tree—indeed, he equates the two. He says that looking at the Bodhi tree, he sees the Buddha. This is not just an unmarked space on the ground, a "place" where an event occurred, but a powerful object with a

field of effects all its own. In the same way that a buddha's relics were said to be functionally equivalent with a living buddha, here Aśoka seems to be saying that seeing the Bodhi tree is functionally equivalent to seeing the Buddha.

After making offerings to the Bodhi tree, Aśoka implores the followers of the Buddha to draw near to him, and soon three hundred thousand monks surround him. But none of them sits in the senior monk's seat. That, he is told, belongs to Piṇḍola Bharadvāja.[56]

Incredulously, Aśoka remarks, "There is a monk still alive who saw the Buddha?"[57] Yes, he is told, Piṇḍola Bharadvāja "saw the Buddha and he still lives."[58] Aśoka then asks if he can see him, for as he explains,

> Great and incomparable would be my gain,
> and my bliss unsurpassed here in this world,
> were I to see before my eyes
> that eminent being of the Bharadvāja clan.[59]

Then Piṇḍola Bharadvāja, "like a royal goose,"[60] descends from the skies, surrounded by thousands of arhats. Aśoka sees him and immediately falls fully prostrate before him. Then, with his hands respectfully clasped, stares at him and tells of the unprecedented "joy"[61] he feels now that "he has seen the elder."[62] As he explains,

> Because of your *darśana*, even today, the Tathāgata is seen. Because compassion was gained and because of your *darśana*, double the *prasāda* arises in me. Elder, you saw the lord of the triple world, my guru, the Lord Buddha![63]

Piṇḍola explains that he has seen him many times, and in response Aśoka asks, "Elder, where did you see the Blessed One, and how?"[64] Piṇḍola then recounts the times that he saw him, beginning with an encounter after the Buddha had conquered Māra during a rainy-season retreat.

> At that time I was right there
> in the presence of the perfectly awakened Buddha.
> As you see me before your eyes,
> that's how I saw the sage.[65]

Piṇḍola then goes on to explain, once in prose and once in verse, that he *saw* the Buddha when he performed the miracle at Śrāvastī and when, after teaching the dharma to his mother, he descended from the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven. "At that time I was right there,"[66] he says again of both events. Piṇḍola then recounts the time at the city of Puṇḍavardhana when the Buddha said to him, "Do not pass into final nirvāṇa until after the dharma has disappeared."[67] And

finally, he explains, he was present when as a child Aśoka "cultivated *prasāda*"[68] and then as an offering put a handful of dirt in the Buddha's bowl. Piṇḍola then tells Aśoka to put aside any doubts he may have and let the community of monks be served their food. Aśoka, however, says that since "he has been awakened to an awareness of the Buddha,"[69] he will bathe the Bodhi tree and afterward offer food to the community of monks. And so, Aśoka announces that he will put on a great quinquennial festival.

Once again Aśoka is concerned with connecting himself to the Buddha through a visual legacy. When he hears that Piṇḍola Bharadvāja, a disciple who saw the Buddha directly, is still alive, Aśoka wants to see him so that he can connect himself with another lineage of seeing the Buddha. Such a sight, Aśoka explains, will bring him "bliss." Aśoka makes his intention clear by saying that he wants to see Piṇḍola "before his eyes" (*sākṣāt*), precisely what Koṭikarṇa says again and again in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* leads to *śraddhā*.

But when Aśoka sees Piṇḍola before his eyes, he develops not *śraddhā* but a "joy," which he then glosses in verse. First, he explains that the Buddha is seen "today," "now," "at present" (*adya*), "because of your *darśana*." This I take in two ways: the Blessed One is seen today "because of your *darśana*"—for you (Piṇḍola) saw the Buddha when he was alive, and now I (Aśoka) see you (Piṇḍola). It is both of these acts that create the visual legacy that allows Aśoka to see the Buddha at present.

A double reading is also possible for the following sentence. Aśoka explains that "double the *prasāda*" arises in him "because compassion was gained and because of your *darśana*."[70] As I already explained, "because of your *darśana*" has two readings, but "because compassion was gained" can also be read in two ways. Piṇḍola had *darśana* of the Buddha because of the latter's compassion for him—that is, he "gained" or "obtained" (*lābha*) the Buddha's compassion—and Aśoka had *darśana* of Piṇḍola because Piṇḍola was likewise compassionate and allowed Aśoka to receive his gaze. In the previous verse, Aśoka explained that his "gain" (*lābha*) would be incomparable if he could see Piṇḍola, but this "gain" could occur only because of the "gain" that Piṇḍola received from the Buddha—his compassion and, hence, his sight—and the similar "gain" that Aśoka received from Piṇḍola.

This double *darśana*, in turn, results in a double *prasāda*. Unlike the brahman in the Toyikā story who missed an opportunity to venerate two buddhas at once, here Aśoka takes advantage of a similar two-for-one deal. By gazing at Piṇḍola, he sees two "agents of *prasāda*" at the same time: Piṇḍola, who "has the body of a solitary buddha"[71] and even performs the miracles of one, flying through the air "like a royal goose," and the Buddha, whose sight is somehow captured in Piṇḍola's visage through a visual legacy.

That Piṇḍola should be an agent of *prasāda* is not surprising, for he is likened to a solitary buddha. But it is curious that Piṇḍola, by seeing the Buddha, has been charged with the Buddha's *prāsādika* power, rendering him doubly effective in generating *prasāda* in others. Whereas in the Toyikā story a "place" became "shrine" because the Buddha sat down upon it, and hence it was "made use of," here Piṇḍola becomes a carrier for the Buddha's *prasāda* though the tactile connection of a corpothetic vision. This is the visual lineage that Aśoka mentioned previously.

In what follows, Aśoka asks Piṇḍola both where and how he saw the Buddha. Again it is no surprise that Aśoka questions Piṇḍola as to where he saw the Buddha, for Aśoka seems to believe that if he goes to a place where the Buddha was seen, he can see him there as well. And in this endeavor he has been successful. By going to those sites associated with the Buddha's biography, seeing those who have seen him, and listening to their descriptions of him, Aśoka claims to have seen the Buddha.

Yet, while Aśoka has managed to *see* the Buddha—though perhaps this term should have scare quotes around it—the "how" aspect of this endeavor is difficult to generalize. Again the same question arises: How can one see the Buddha after he has passed into final nirvāṇa? In this regard, Piṇḍola provides an answer, not necessarily for how Aśoka himself can see the Buddha, but for how he thinks Aśoka can help others to see the Buddha.

Piṇḍola begins his answer by making it clear that he was present at many of the Buddha's great deeds, such as his miracle at Śrāvastī and his descent from the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven, and that he saw them with his own eyes. This establishes his visual lineage with the Buddha, which is crucial for Aśoka's own method of seeing him, but it also establishes him as an eyewitness, an authorizing presence who can legitimize the veracity of what the Buddha has said and done. Given all that Piṇḍola has seen, he can have *śraddhā* in the word of the Buddha, and others can have it in him.

In this regard, Piṇḍola tells of the incident at Puṇḍavardhana when the Buddha instructed him not to pass into final nirvāṇa until the dharma has disappeared. When Piṇḍola repeats this injunction in verse, he explains that it was an "order" (*ājñā*) given to him by the Buddha. With that said, Piṇḍola then gives a firsthand account of the time when Aśoka offered a handful of dirt to the Buddha, and the Buddha, following the standard *prasāda* typology, foretold the reward that this offering would bring. Remarking once again that "at that time I was right there,"[72] Piṇḍola quotes the Buddha's prediction:

> One hundred years after my final nirvāṇa, this boy will be a king named Aśoka in the city of Pāṭaliputra. He will be a *cakravartin* king

> ruling over one of the four continents, a dharmic dharmarāja who will widely distribute my bodily relics and establish eighty-four thousand *dharmarājikā*s.[73]

This prediction, as we know from what precedes it in the story, has already come true. One hundred years after the Buddha's final nirvāṇa in the city of Pāṭaliputra, Aśoka was born and then he became a *cakravartin* king who distributed the Buddha's relics. Being a *cakravartin* king, Aśoka is "dharmic" or "a follower of the dharma" (*dhārmika*), and he is "a dharma-king" (*dharmarāja*). As Strong (1989: 56) explains, "all cakravartins, no matter what their type, were dharmarājas . . . they at least nominally relied on Dharma, honored, revered, and esteemed Dharma, had Dharma as their standard, Dharma as their banner, and Dharma as their mandate."[74]

But Aśoka has done more than just uphold the dharma; he has also disseminated it. He has created eighty-four thousand *dharmarājikā*s—"dharma-king" monuments,[75] sometimes called stūpas,[76] which contain the relics of that other dharma-king, the Buddha. As the Buddha said previously to Ānanda with regard to Aśoka,

> He will make Jambudvīpa fully adorned with my reliquaries
> and cause them to be honored by gods and mortals.[77]

It is this act of constructing *dharmarājikā*s that is instrumental in establishing Aśoka as a preserver of the dharma, for as the text explains, "when King Aśoka had completed the eighty-four thousand *dharmarājikā*s, he then became a dharmic dharmarāja."[78]

In this way, the Buddha's predictions about Piṇḍola and Aśoka are intertwined. Piṇḍola can live as long as the dharma survives, and Aśoka, by upholding and disseminating the dharma, tries to ensure that the dharma does just that. Piṇḍola's life is in Aśoka's hands.[79]

But Piṇḍola's answer is flawed. Piṇḍola seems to think that the construction of *dharmarājikā*s will allow people to see the dharma, that the "how" aspect of seeing the Buddha can be accomplished by visiting such sites and gazing upon them. And this very well may be true, as it seems to be in other sources.[80] Seeing the Buddha has been equated to seeing the dharma, and buddha relics have been equated to a living buddha, so perhaps seeing buddha relics functions the same as seeing the dharma. Yet, when Aśoka wants to see the dharma, he doesn't visit any of the *dharmarājikā*s that he has had constructed. Instead of going to see the Buddha's relics, he goes to see sites associated with the Buddha's biography. In short, the Buddha is seen not in the places where his remains happen to be housed but in places where he lived.

In addition to creating *dharmarājikā*s, Aśoka has also created another system of shrines to benefit sentient beings. Once again, let us return to the story. Before embarking on his pilgrimage to various sites associated with the Buddha's life, Aśoka exhorts his ministers: "Gentlemen, spare no effort in honoring the Blessed One!"[81] With that said, he falls prostrate before Upagupta and says, "Elder, this is my desire. I shall honor those places where the Lord Buddha lived, and mark them with signs as a favor to posterity."[82] "Well done! Well done, great king!" Upagupta replies. "Your intention is magnificent."[83]

During the course of Aśoka's pilgrimage, as was his wish and apparent intention, he visits places where the Buddha lived, makes offerings there, and in many cases has shrines built.[84] It is through this last act that these places are marked with signs. But how is the construction of these signs "a favor to posterity"?

As in the case at Toyikā, it seems that he has turned these "places" (*pradeśa*) into "shrines" (*caitya*), and in doing so, has created objects that will allow others to "honor" (√*arc*) the Buddha just as he has done. What once were unmarked places on the ground are now places that are marked—perhaps with "signs," perhaps with "shrines." Others can now visit them and, perhaps, upon seeing them and hearing tell of the Buddha's exploits, become filled with *prasāda*. Even without such shrines, Aśoka was able to do so, calling forth visual proxies. With the construction of shrines, it seems that the task could only be easier.

Upagupta and Māra

The story of Upagupta's interaction with Māra offers a different answer for how to see the Buddha after his final nirvāṇa.[85] Unlike Aśoka, Upagupta is a monk, not a king, and the method he describes is certainly not available to the masses. But like Aśoka, he too desires to see the Buddha's physical form. Even though he is an arhat, and as such has seen the dharma, he wants to see the Buddha as well. To see one might be to see the other, but Upagupta, like Koṭikarṇa, wants to see both.

Upagupta first comes into contact with Māra shortly after his initiation as a monk, when Māra disrupts his first large-scale public teaching of the dharma with showers of pearls and gold and with divine displays. This prompts Upagupta to discipline Māra by saddling him with what at first look like garlands of flowers but then turn out to be a dead snake, a dead dog, and a human corpse. Unable to remove these hideous garlands or find another who can do so—even Brahmā is unable—Māra approaches Upagupta contritely. Upagupta then explains to him that "there is no way to wash away bad dharmas planted

in the mind besides *prasāda* in the Tathāgata."[86] With that said, "[Māra] recollected for a long time the virtues of the Buddha and, with a mind made full of *prasāda* in the Buddha, fell prostrate at the feet of the elder [Upagupta]."[87] Then he asked to have the garlands removed.

Upagupta agrees to remove the garlands, but first an agreement must be made. "What agreement?"[88] Māra asks. First, Upagupta explains, Māra must no longer harass the monks. But there is also a more personal duty. "Unsettled, Māra says, 'Elder, have *prasāda*. What do you command?' "[89] Upagupta then remarks that since he became a monk one hundred years after the Buddha's final nirvāṇa, he has never seen the Buddha's physical form. As he laments,

> I have already seen the dharmic form
> of the lord of the triple world,
> which resembles a mountain of gold,
> but I have not seen his physical form.[90]

Hence, Māra's second duty is that he must "make manifest here the form of the Buddha."[91] Māra agrees, but he sets forth an agreement as well:

> When suddenly you behold him here,
> wearing the costume of a buddha,
> you are not to bow down
> out of respect for the virtues of the Omniscient One.
>
> With your mind rendered beautiful
> from bringing the Buddha to mind,
> if you make show of even a little *pūjā* toward me,
> O powerful one, I will be burned up.[92]

Upagupta assents, and then Māra enters the forest to transform himself. When Māra emerges, "he has magically created the form of the Blessed One, a sight one never tires of seeing, adorned with a circular halo extending an arm's length."[93] He has also created the form of many of the Buddha's great disciples and of a large crowd of monks. At this, Upagupta is joyful, thinking "This is just like the form of the Blessed One!"[94] But he also laments at the pitilessness of impermanence that destroys physical forms such as the Buddha's body. Then, "with his awareness focused on the Buddha as an object, his mind became fixed, such that he thought, 'I am seeing the Lord Buddha!' "[95] He then approaches the form that Māra has manifested, and with his hands respectfully folded, he remarks, "Oh! The splendid form of the Blessed One! What more is there!"[96] He then continues extolling the virtues of the Buddha's physical form as well as those of karma, which allowed for this to happen.

> Then, having forgotten that his conception occurred by focusing on the Perfectly Awakened One as an object, with his conception fixed on the Buddha, he fell prostrate at Māra's feet with his whole body, like a tree cut down at the roots.
>
> Unsettled, Māra then says, "Bhadanta, you shouldn't transgress that agreement [of ours] in this way."
>
> "What agreement?" Upagupta says.
>
> Māra then says, "Didn't Bhadanta make this promise: 'I will not bow down to you'?"[97]

In response, Upagupta "replies, with the words stuck in his throat, 'Evil one!' "[98] Upagupta then explains that he knows that the Buddha has passed into nirvāṇa, "yet seeing his figure, which is pleasing to the eye, I bow down to that seer. I don't honor you."[99] Māra then asks how it is that he isn't honored when Upagupta bows down in this way. In response, Upagupta explains—

> Just as a person bows before clay images of the gods
> without honoring some conception of clay
> but with a conception of the gods [in mind],
> likewise, gazing upon you here,
> bearing the form of the lord of the world,
> I bowed down without honoring some conception of Māra
> but with a conception of the Sugata [in mind].[100]

Māra then sheds his Buddha disguise, pays his respects to Upagupta, and departs. Four days later, though, he himself rings a bell in Mathurā for the following proclamation: "Whoever among you wishes for the joy of heaven and release should listen to the dharma from the elder Upagupta! And let those of you who never saw the Tathāgata see the elder Upagupta!"[101] And he said,

> Whoever wants to cast off poverty, which is the root of misfortune,
> [and to attain] prosperity with ample splendor here [and now],
> and whoever longs for heaven and release,
> he should listen with *śraddhā* [in Upagupta]
> to the dharma [that he teaches].
>
> Those who have not seen the greatly compassionate Teacher,
> that self-made and foremost of men,
> should look upon the elder Upagupta as though he were the Teacher,
> a shining light in the three spheres of existence.[102]

Word of this spread through Mathurā, and soon many hundreds and thousands of brahmans assembled. For them, Upagupta preached a step-by-step discourse, and from hearing this, many hundreds and thousands of beings planted roots of virtue leading to liberation; others attained the reward of the stream-enterer, once-returner, or nonreturner; and eighteen thousand individuals went forth as monks and eventually attained arhatship.

Upagupta begins Māra's training in the dharma by explaining that the only way to clear away one's bad dharma is to cultivate *prasāda* in the Buddha. Māra then follows Upagupta's advice, not by visiting a *prāsādika* object but by calling one to mind. Much like the monk in the *Cakravartivyākṛta-avadāna*, Māra brings the Buddha to mind through the practice of *buddhānusmṛti*, though here there is no mention of a tenfold list of characteristics. Considering the number of times that Māra tried to tempt or annoy the Buddha, which he readily admits to Upagupta, it is not surprising that he can conjure his image without relying on a list of attributes.

For Upagupta, however, the Buddha is a figure from the past he has never met. Though he has seen him in his incarnation as the dharma, he has never seen him in his physical embodiment, alive in flesh and blood. Hence, Upagupta agrees to remove the garland of carcasses with which he has saddled Māra only if the latter will stop harassing the monks and "make manifest here the form of the Buddha." Māra agrees, under the provision that Upagupta not perform certain ritual acts toward him.

Māra's conditions are ambiguous, though, not just to Upagupta who is incredulous when he is later accused of transgressing these conditions, but also to the reader. First, there is some confusion as to who or what Upagupta will suddenly behold. Māra explains that Upagupta will "see him [the Buddha] here, wearing the costume of a buddha." But clearly this isn't the case, for Upagupta will see Māra dressed up as the Buddha, not the Buddha dressed up as the Buddha. This is why Mukhopadhyaya in his edition of the *Aśokāvadāna* emends the *tam* to *tvam*, the accusative "him" to the nominative "you," though no mention is made that such an emendation has occurred or that this reading is unattested among the manuscripts used to produce the *Divyāvadāna*. This switch, however, allows an easier reading to be intuited if not preserved—"When suddenly you behold [me] here, wearing the costume of a buddha." Yet, it is precisely this ambiguity that is explored throughout this encounter between Upagupta and Māra. When Upagupta bows down before an image of the Buddha, whether that image be made of Māra himself or of clay, who precisely is the object of veneration? I will return to this question shortly.

Māra then tells Upagupta to refrain from two acts. Upagupta is not to bow down out of respect for the Buddha's virtues, and he is not to make Māra the

object of *pūjā*, or the latter will be consumed by fire. While the first act is unclear in terms of object—presumably it is Māra who is not to be bowed down to—the second act is unclear in terms of practice. Māra's fear is not that Upagupta will perform *pūjā* toward him, but that he will make a display of *pūjā* toward him. Is Māra afraid here of Upagupta's actions or appearances? Are the two one in the same?

Regardless of these ambiguities, Upagupta assents. Māra then disappears into the forest and soon reappears in the guise of the Buddha with an extended entourage. Gazing at this representation of the Buddha, Upagupta marvels at the likeness of the image before him to the Buddha—though one wonders how Upagupta could make such an assessment if he never before saw the Buddha's physical form. Just as Māra himself had done previously, Upagupta uses an image of Māra's creation to perform *buddhānusmṛti*, though on this occasion the image is created with Māra's body and not with Māra's mind.

Notice that when Upagupta sees Māra dressed up as the Buddha, he doesn't really see the Blessed One but only something "just like the form of the Blessed One." He doesn't see the Buddha through Māra; rather, Māra's impersonation of the Buddha allows Upagupta to bring the Buddha to mind, and it is only then, with his mind fixed on an image of the Buddha, that he can really see him. It is only then that he exclaims, "I am seeing the Lord Buddha!"

It is at this moment, while Upagupta is seeing the Buddha in his mind, that he falls prostrate before Māra. Māra seems to interpret this act as follows: since Upagupta bows down before him, this means that he bows down *to* him, in the sense that he is an object of veneration or, to his peril, an object of *pūjā*. Unsettled, Māra then cautions Upagupta not to transgress their agreement, but Upagupta pleads ignorance. "What agreement?" he says.

Upagupta's reply here is precisely what Māra said to Upagupta when the latter first explained the conditions under which he would remove the carcasses that he had hung around Māra's neck. In fact, talk of various "agreements" (*samaya*) occurs throughout the interchanges between Māra and Upagupta, giving a juridical sensibility to the actions they perform and the pronouncements that they make.

In response to Upagupta's query, Māra misquotes Upagupta's previous assent, providing an object for a practice when previously there was none: "Didn't Bhadanta make this promise: 'I will not bow down to you.' " This misquotation constitutes a refinement of the terms of their agreement concerning the first of the acts not to be performed, but it also allows for a clarification regarding the propriety and efficacy of bowing down before images. When bowing down before living beings, the object of veneration is, presumably, the being that is

bowed down to. Yet the object of veneration is not so clear when bowing down before images.

After Upagupta overcomes his apparent anger at this misinterpretation, he then clarifies that one can honor a conception of the Buddha through an image of the Buddha, and this is what he was doing when he bowed down before Māra. Hence, though Māra may have thought he was being honored when Upagupta bowed down before him, it was actually the Buddha who was being honored through this act. This is why Māra did not burst into flames when Upagupta bowed down before him. In short, objects are the means through which veneration can be performed.

Such instrumentality is also on display during Aśoka's visit to the stūpas of the Buddha's foremost disciples. Though Aśoka makes offerings at the stūpas, he is not honoring the materials that make up the stūpas but the disciples for whom those stūpas were built. Regardless of whether these stūpas are themselves those disciples, an ontological equation I discussed previously, or only functional referents for those disciples, Aśoka makes it clear that the disciples are the objects of his devotion, not the stūpas.[103]

John Strong has also written about this problem of the status of images and devotional acts performed toward them, and I owe much to his insights. Concerning the episode between Upagupta and Māra, Strong (1989: 108) offers this explanation:

> Upagupta is not saying and is not acting as though the Buddha were somewhere else than before him. For him, the image of the Buddha, fashioned by Māra, that is, his form, his rūpakāya, "is" the Buddha. What it is made of—clay, wood, metal, or, in this case, Māra—is not the Buddha; but it itself comes to re-present the Buddha in a way that is obviously religiously real.

Though I disagree with Strong about which image of the Buddha *is* the Buddha, for Upagupta makes it clear that the buddha that Māra has fashioned only resembles the Buddha while the one he has created in this mind *is* the Buddha, Strong's insight into the function of such images is crucial. They allow for the Buddha to be re-presented, brought into the present tense for the practitioner. As David Freedberg (1989: 30) explains, responses to images are often "predicated on the perception that what is represented on an image is actually present, or present in it. But perhaps with such responses, it is not that the bodies are present; it is *as though* they were present."

What is interesting here is the mechanism by which the Buddha is represented. In Upagupta's case, the Buddha isn't present in Māra, he doesn't

see the Buddha in Māra; instead, Māra is instrumentally useful for seeing the Buddha and making him present. While Māra is the instrument, the practice of *buddhānusmṛti* is the agent. Aśoka uses Māra's representation of the Buddha to perform *buddhānusmṛti* so that the Buddha can be truly re-presented.

In Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga, buddhānussati* (Skt., *buddhānusmṛti*) is said to be performed on the basis of ten epithets of the Buddha (Vajiranana 1975: 183–208), yet here an image is used to perform the practice, as is the case with the monk in the *Cakravartivyākṛta-avadāna*. Though the particularities of the practice described here are obscure to me,[104] it is clear in this case that *buddhānusmṛti* is being performed in conjunction with an image. This accords with Paul Harrison's (1992a: 220) assessment that "there can be no doubt that by the second century CE some Buddhists were indeed practicing a form of *buddhānusmṛti* that . . . included detailed visualization of the physical body of the Buddha, and was accompanied by the use of images."

So what is at stake here? As is clear from the *prasāda* typology that I discussed previously, it isn't enough to see the Buddha or other *prāsādika* objects, one must also make offerings to them. But how can this be done after the Buddha's final nirvāṇa? How can one see the physical form of the Buddha and make offerings to him after he is dead and gone? The Aśoka story provides various answers to this question. Aśoka sees the Buddha by going on pilgrimage to sites where the Buddha was—or, perhaps, those that he made use of—and gazing at those who themselves had seen the Buddha and listening to their descriptions of him. He then makes offerings to the sites themselves, creating shrines in the process so that future pilgrims will be able to see and give and benefit with greater ease. Upagupta, by contrast, sees the Buddha by gazing at an image of the Buddha and performing the practice of *buddhānusmṛti*. He then bows down, not to the image of the Buddha that Māra created, but directly to the Buddha himself, though he is dead and gone.

And so one wonders: If Upagupta can use an image of the Buddha to see the Buddha and venerate him, were paintings and sculptures of the Buddha used for the same purpose? If one looked at an image of the Buddha, engaged in a visualization of him, and then made an offering with him in mind, would that person have received all the merit that one would receive from directly looking at the Buddha and making an offering to him? This would have allowed those practices that are described as being directed toward the Buddha with extraordinary results, such as Aśoka's gift of dirt, to be replicated after his final nirvāṇa. Furthermore, was this matrix of practices tied to pilgrimage? Aśoka manages to see the Buddha at sites famous for the Buddha's deeds, and buddha

images were certainly more plentiful at Buddhist monasteries and pilgrimage centers than in private homes. So were stories such as the Aśoka cycle used to justify the practice of pilgrimage by explaining its logic and benefits? Did one travel to Buddhist shrines because it was there that the Buddha could be represented and seen, there where one could make offerings and achieve fantastic rewards?

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8

Images and Imagination

A myth is a unit of imagination which makes it possible for a human being to accommodate two worlds.

—Antjie Krog, *Country of My Skull*

One way to begin to answer questions about the forms of ritual activity that occurred after the Buddha's final nirvāṇa is to consider carefully the sculptures and paintings on Buddhist monuments in South Asia. There one finds no shortage of representations of the Buddha and of narratives that involve him,[1] including scenes from the *Divyāvadāna*.[2] Buddhologists and Indologists of the last centuries, however, have tended to evaluate these images from the perspective of a universalist Kantian aesthetics, with its disinterested evaluation of beauty, and to embrace them or dismiss them as such.[3] Yet an examination of the early social life of these objects indicates that a different sort of engagement with them was prevalent in the past.

Michael Meister (1995: 194), for example, suggests that traditionally images in South Asia were evaluated not by some " 'universals' of aesthetic criticism" but by their efficacy in creating *darśana* for the viewer. Hence, "art and architecture . . . [were] tools to create . . . mental visions" (1995: 193). In this realm, "to 'know' divinity is to 'see' it," and so a work of art "has as its goal a transforming vision, of which the artist and artwork are tools and the viewer becomes the vehicle" (1995: 193, 194). As Meister (1995: 199–200) explains,

> We may look—as art historians or, worse, antiquarians—at an image of the Hindu Great Goddess to judge if it is beautiful or well formed, and at its age or provenance; but its role in the temple's sanctum is as a stimulus for the worshipper's 'vision.' Thus around it rituals arise that paint and clothe the image, surround it in sound and scent, in order further to accentuate its psychological effect on the viewer and make it efficacious.

Unfortunately, no examination of millennia-old images, however thorough, can uncover the thoughts and sensations that visitors had in the early centuries of the Common Era when they experienced such images *in situ* at monasteries and shrines in Gandhāra and Mathurā, the main treasure troves of Kuṣāṇa-period art. Much like David Tomas's (1996: 14) insights regarding Michael Leahy's infamous first-contact photographs from the 1930s in the New Guinea Highlands, "their paradox lies in their almost perfect opacity: to see and yet not to know means to be privy to a truth in these cases, which for us cannot exist." As Tomas (1996: 14) explains, "Histories and theories are bird's-eye reconstructions that, even with all the goodwill in the world, do not correspond to the visceral practices and contorted structures of first-contact events." It is these visceral practices, these corpothetic moments of seeing, that hold the key for interpreting much early Buddhist art in South Asia.

Such practices cannot be intuited or discerned by merely judging the apparent aesthetic qualities of such objects and identifying their component parts. The bridge between seeing and knowing is not that easy to span. Even evaluating Indian Buddhist images by indigenous standards of beauty, whether ancient or modern, still misses the point.[4] As Meister makes clear, these images were created not for their splendor but for their ritual efficacy.[5] The aesthetic involved was not one of disinterested pleasure but of karmic effect. Their value as art was in their capacity as visual objects to further one's karmic development.[6] Hence, in trying to determine the use and reception of these images, an awareness of this aesthetic and its manifold forms is crucial. Understanding what images were supposed to do is necessary for understanding how images were used.

In short, understanding the workings of images in South Asia requires apprehending the social conjunctions and mental worlds that were produced when these objects were experienced. This is an undertaking of some difficulty, particularly in the case of premodern South Asia, where data are rather meager for hypothesizing an anthropology of art. If such practices are to be inferred, though, careful consideration must be given to the use of such objects as well as

to the visual aesthetic of those who viewed them, the valued formal qualities of their visual perception—what Jeremy Coote (1992: 248) calls "the cultural eye."

Robert L. Brown's (1997) article on the visual representations of jātakas on South and Southeast Asian monuments offers a good starting point for such an endeavor. Brown tries to make sense of so-called narrative art[7] by first addressing very practical concerns that belie the notion that art is meant to be read, that the visual aesthetic in place was one of decoding, and in the process also challenges the idea that such art was intended to produce the kind of *darśana* experience Meister describes.

In contrast to Vidya Dehejia (1990), who presumes a narrative coherence in Buddhist sculpture and painting, Brown argues that the difficulties in seeing and deciphering narrative art on Buddhist monuments makes it extremely unlikely that a narrative reading of these images was intended. Often these images are inaccessible without ladders, invisible without flashlights, and even when they can be seen, no linear narrative is represented. As Brown (1997: 98) remarks,

> Images do not "tell" stories. As I have said, the story or narrative must be known if the images illustrating the story are to make sense (at least in terms of the word story). There is no way anyone could ever, even after seeing all the visual depictions extant of a particular jātaka story, be able to tell what the name of the characters are, what their exact relationships are, the exact sequence of their interactions, and the sometimes surprising moral point being made, without having read the text or heard the story.[8]

These representations, Brown (1997: 72, 73–74) posits, were not intended to be "'read,' or even looked at in any logical or analytical fashion"; instead, they functioned "to indicate, to make 'actual,' the Buddha through his life and history . . . to make the Buddha's presence felt, his forms and teachings manifest." Hence, the individual who engaged with these images was not a viewer-cum-reader, but a practitioner-cum-worshipper. As Brown (1997: 71) remarks regarding the paintings at Ajanta,

> The paintings were there for worshippers, not for viewers, and the choice of "viewer" as the way to characterize most often the person relating to the Indian art is to "art historicize" the material, to make it an issue between art historian and object. Instead, the issue for me is between worshipper and deity.[9]

Brown (1997: 74, 100) concludes that these images were used "to historicize and manifest the presence of the Buddha"—to *re-present* him, using

Strong's locution—"through a visual (re)presentation of his history."[10] But how was the Buddha historicized and manifested through these narrative images? Much has been written on the notion that stūpas were considered to be living beings, making the Buddha manifest and present for his devotees,[11] but how did narrative images that could barely be seen and hardly be read participate in this process?[12]

Brown (1997: 73) argues these images of the Buddha's deeds historicize and actualize the Buddha's presence "simply by being there."[13] Brown (1997: 65, 98) claims that these narrative images "are not present on the monuments to tell stories, but are there with an iconic function," and by icon in this context, Brown means that it is "a form of the deity that is the focus of reverence and worship." But if these images can't really be seen or read, how can they be a focus of ritual activity? If, as Meister claims, "to 'know' divinity is to 'see' it," what were the ritual activities that would have allowed practitioners to engage with this "form of the deity" that these narrative images manifested? How can it be, as Brown (1997: 99) claims, that "jātakas on the monuments worked as icons"? Furthermore, considering how may stories in the *Divyāvadāna* are about seeing the Buddha, why represent scenes from these stories, images that involve seeing the Buddha, in such a way that visiting pilgrims can't easily see them or understand them?

My sense is that, contrary to Brown, these images didn't "historicize and manifest the presence of the Buddha . . . simply by being there." Instead, as in the case of Aśoka, these images needed words to bring them to life. While devotees were viewing and experiencing these images, guides of some sort were most likely narrating stories or reciting panegyrics associated with them.[14] Dehejia herself suggests that guides played a crucial mentoring role in mediating the images for the viewer at the stūpa at Bharhut. As Dehejia (1998: 22–23) explains,

> It seems likely that the first-time visitor to Bharhut was taken around the stupa by a monk who acted as a spiritual guide. After all, is that not our experience even today when we visit Puri, Hardwar, or Varanasi? While the Buddhist pilgrim would have been familiar with the Buddha's life story and the important jātakas, he or she would not have deciphered too many narratives without a mentor's guidance.[15]

Brown may be correct that these images helped to actualize the Buddha's presence, but these images surely functioned as visual prompts as well—if not as their primary function, then as a secondary one.[16] Though Brown suggests that these objects were not intended to be read, perhaps this "phantasmagoria"[17] of images were meant to be narrativized, evoked, and described in the

manner of Kālika, Piṇḍola, Upagupta, or even Dehejia. Donations, of course, would have followed.

These days, when one visits sites such as Ajanta, Bodh Gaya, Sanchi, and Sarnath, guides are available to usher visitors from object to object and tell them a variety of stories that are associated with each piece—stories that are often included in the *Divyāvadāna*, such as the miracle at Śrāvastī (Divy 143–166) and the prediction of Lord Dīpaṅkara (Divy 246–254).[18] Brown is right that images don't tell stories and that it is difficult to read or deduct the "authorized" stories from them, but at least in my experience, guides often use these images as touchstones to tell a variety of stories. On repeated visits to these sites, I have heard different guides offer different identifications of the same objects, different readings for the same inscriptions, and conflicting stories about the date of a piece, its ritual functions, or the narrative that it represents. Only sometimes do these identifications, inscriptions, and stories coincide with the history of these objects as told by the Archaeological Survey of India or other voices of authority. Brown argues that since objects at these sites are difficult to see and interpret, they didn't serve a narrative function. But this is not the case at present.

Objects can be evocative of stories in a way quite separate from their status as pieces of art. This contrast is made particularly clear in James Clifford's work on the politics of museums. In *Routes*, Clifford describes a discussion that occurred in 1989 between staff members of the Portland Museum of Art and elders of various Tlingit tribes from Alaska. The museum was about to update its installation of Tlingit objects, such as a headdress looking like an octopus and a beaded jacket, so Tlingit elders were invited to the museum for their input. The curatorial staff seems to have expected the Tlingit elders to comment on the use, function, and history of particular items in the museum collection within their tribe. Yet,

> the objects were not the subject of much direct commentary by the elders, who had their own agenda for the meeting. They referred to the regalia with appreciation and respect, but they seemed only to use them as aides-mémoire, occasions for the telling of stories and the singing of songs. (1997: 189)

As Clifford (1997: 191) explains, staff at the museum were faced with a number of questions:

> Could they reconcile the meanings evoked by the Tlingit elders with those imposed in the context of a museum of "art"? How much could they decenter the physical objects in favor of narrative, history,

> and politics? Are there strategies that can display a mask as simultaneously a formal composition, an object with specific traditional functions in clan/tribal life, and as something that evokes an ongoing history of struggle?

"Suffice it to say," Clifford concludes, "the choices posed by the elders remained unresolved."[19]

I quote this at length because the inaccessibility and often uncertain discursive quality of images on Buddhist monuments are not necessarily indicative of an intended non-narrative function.[20] The placement and configuration of such objects could have been governed by a variety of rules—those of expediency, aesthetics, architecture, and so on—and the classification of such objects by modern scholars or devotees as either narrative or non-narrative, figural or discursive, abstract or representational, does not necessarily offer insight into their use or function.[21] These very dichotomies, in fact, may not have been meaningful or recognized by the communities who first engaged with these objects.[22] Even the longstanding scholarly tradition of classifying early Buddhist art as either iconic or aniconic has been shown to be highly problematic.[23]

Regardless of these problems of practice and interpretation, what occurs now at Buddhist temples and archeological sites in India is frequently an experience akin to theater. Statues, paintings, and architecture are often a backdrop for a guide's narration or for a dialog among visitors, and though the particular images seen, descriptions heard, and conversations held may differ from tour to tour, the experience of the audience-cum-actors is nevertheless that of theater. Whether this succeeds in re-presenting the Buddha, however, is another question.

Still, theater provides a heuristically useful analog. Like Tlingit art, plays are "occasions for the telling of stories and the singing of songs." In Bhavabhuti's drama from the eighth century CE, *Uttararāmacarita* ("The Later Story of Rāma"), a theater of images and words is enacted, if not delicately parodied, and shown to produce visceral responses in the actors themselves. In act one, for example, Rāma, Sītā, and Lakṣmaṇa walk through a picture gallery that displays images of their own exploits. As Rāma and Sītā see an image of the preparations being made for their wedding, Sītā explains, "Ah! I feel as though I'm in that very place, at that very time."[24] Rāma too remarks that "it is as though that time exists again."[25] As they proceed, the pictures bring the events represented once again to the present for Rāma and Sītā. Though Rāma chides Sītā at one point for responding too strongly to an image that reminds her of their separation in the forest—"My dear, you fear separation, but this is only a

picture!"[26]—both are sufficiently taken in by these images to feel real fear and pain and shed tears. While the characters of Rāma and Sītā can read the images that tell their story, for these images are meant to be read, as an element of theater, encountering these images also provides them with an occasion for narrating their deeds of the past and reflecting on their legacy. Presumably the audience, as viewers of this spectacle, would have felt, whether the picture galleries on stage were seen or unseen, readable or unreadable, that to some extent Rāma and Sītā had come to life.[27] But precisely how initial audiences responded cannot be known—another instance of an unrecoverable first-contact event. Perhaps, though, they responded as did the great nineteenth-century sage Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahaṃsa when he saw a performance of the Caitanya Līlā: he entered *samādhi* repeatedly, and at the end of the performance "said with a smile, 'I found the representation the same as the real' " (Gupta 1984: 556; cited in Pinney 1997b: 839).[28]

In short, though I agree with Brown that Buddhist art on South Asian monuments is often exceedingly difficult to read, I don't think that these images are divorced from the narratives that they seem to represent, even if the relationship between the two is hard to recognize. Perhaps these narratives were created precisely to make sense of these images. As Jonathan Walters (1997: 181n10) suggests, it may be that "the carvings gave shape to the later texts that seem to correspond to them, rather than the other way around." The *Divyāvadāna* may even have been a chapbook for monastery tour guides.

If these narrative images on Buddhist monuments were, as I suggest, meant to be narrativized as a means of bringing the Buddha's story to life, then the aesthetic in play here is certainly not one of clarity and simplicity of communication. Viewers were not meant to decode these images on their own, identifying the characters, stories, and morals at a glance, and the producers of the images were not trying to communicate discursive information in an easy manner. This is not a case of viewers lacking a proficiency or fluency in a certain visual regime, like viewers of film in its nascent period who needed direction to comprehend the images before them, for it seems that independent viewing was not the goal. Unlikely as well is that these images, with their indistinct iconic forms, were "tools to create . . . mental visions," to re-cite Meister's claim.

Instead, viewers would have needed help to make sense of these images, a guide to serve them, as Upagupta did for Aśoka. Most likely, the intended viewers were the laity and the intended guides monastics, and the former were meant to be dependent on the latter. Consider the case in the *Sahasodgata-avadāna*, as I mentioned in chapter 2, when the Buddha has a group of monks draw a wheel of existence in the entrance hall of their monastery. Brahmans and householders frequently come and see it, but they can't make sense of it. In

response, the Buddha tells the monks to appoint a monk to show it and explain it to them. After an initial appointee shows himself to be unequal to the task, the Buddha specifies that the appointee must be competent.

And so perhaps this was the model—competent monks were to be stationed at images to explain them to the uncomprehending laity.[29] Through their words, these monks would help bring these images to life for the laity, but the inaccessibility of these images would also make the laity dependent on monastics, creating a sense of reliance on would-be *kalyāṇamitra*s. It is frequently said in the *Divyāvadāna* that those affected by Buddhist teachings are "favorably inclined toward the Buddha, intent on the dharma, and well disposed toward the monastic community."[30] What my translation here fails to convey is the physical sense that these individuals are "leaning in," (*nimna*), "sloping toward" (*pravaṇa*), and "bent over" (*prāgbhāra*) the Buddha, the dharma, and the monastic community.[31] They are supported and upheld by them, and as these avadānas repeatedly demonstrate, this dependence is necessary for their karmic development.

In addition to these narrative images, Buddhist monuments in South Asia also contain large numbers of iconic images of the Buddha engaged in various postures, such as the *abhaya* or *dhyāna* mūdras that were popular in Gandhāra, and their function is also not clear. While these too can be narrativized—one could, for example, tell stories about the protection or instruction that the Buddha offered or his achievements in meditation—instead of differentiating these images as narrative and non-narrative, narrative and iconic, I find it more productive to locate Buddhist images along a continuum between discursive and figural.[32] With this distinction in mind, so-called narrative art can be thought of as highly discursive, and its problem in the Buddhist case being that it is very difficult to engage with discursively. These other images of the Buddha, however, are more figural, and the problem here is the meaning of that figuration—that is, how are they meant to be appreciated affectively and put to ritual use?[33]

In light of the description in the *Divyāvadāna* of the non-discursive, iconic function of *prāsādika* objects, perhaps these objects were likewise empowered.[34] More figural than those discursive images closely associated with Buddhist narratives, these images were likely more important for their effects than their stories. Perhaps they were icons for *darśana*, prompts for the practice of *buddhānusmṛti* or *prasāda*, not touchstones or aides-mémoires for stories.

Again the analog of theater comes to mind, and the *Uttararāmacarita* in particular. There too, figural images, those iconic representations that are less imbued with narrative concerns, are shown to have a powerful effect on viewers. In act six, when Rāma's son, Lava, who has never met his father, unknowingly sees him for the first time, he remarks,

It's a wonder!
Hostility is put to rest, a blissful feeling spreads over me,
impudence departs, I know not where,
and humility makes me bend low.
How is it that immediately at the sight of him,
it is as though I am under another's control?
Great men are like holy places,
with a greatness that is priceless and inexplicable.[35]

Such iconic moments are reminiscent of the experience that characters in the *Divyāvadāna* often have when they see *prāsādika* objects. They are immediately moved by the power of those objects, whether they be "great men," such as the Buddha, or "holy places," such as the shrine at Toyikā. Either way, there is a loss of autonomy as the power of those objects takes control over the viewer.

Most likely images on Buddhist monuments in South Asia fulfilled a variety of different roles and were put to a variety of different uses—some discursive, some figural. The various practices associated with these images may very well have involved actualizing the Buddha's presence, as in the case of telling hagiographic stories or cultivating *buddhānusmṛti* or *prasāda*. Such appraisals are only guesswork, but the practices and appraisals found in the *Divyāvadāna* support this guesswork. And since these practices were not documented in inscriptions, such narrative accounts may very well provide a crucial link to the past. It is precisely these accounts that can help textual anthropologists better understand the various visual aesthetics at play here, and this is the only way that internal and external aspects of these practices can ever be made to come together.

A Visual World

The visual world of the *Divyāvadāna* is markedly different from the world of Theravādin Buddhism found in Pali texts. As Steven Collins (1992: 121) explains, even after the introduction of writing and the preservation of texts as written documents, this latter tradition "remained in various ways also an oral/aural one." Collins presents numerous examples from inscriptions as well as canonical and postcanonical sources to demonstrate that, as David McMahan (1998: 252) paraphrases, "the traditional method of educating monks and nuns was largely for those students to hear and commit to memory the words of their teacher." "Buddhist texts," Collins (1992: 130) remarks succinctly, "were more often experienced through the voice and ears than the hands and eyes."[36]

In contrast to the oral/aural character of the Theravāda, the Mahāyāna tradition—like the *Divyāvadāna*, which is considered either an early Mahāyāna or a proto-Mahāyāna text—has a more visual character. In his work on the contours and significance of this shift, David McMahan (1998: 264) cites, for example, the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra*, which "is written as a visual extravaganza, not only in its barrage of vivid imagery, but in its frequent use of visually oriented language and metaphor. The emphasis throughout the text is on what is seen rather than what is heard." More broadly, McMahan contends, the writers of Mahāyāna texts made use of this visionary character as part of a program of legitimation in which the bodhisattva of the Mahāyāna is conceived of as superior to the *śrāvaka* ("the hearer"), who is idealized in the Pali scriptures of the Theravāda. McMahan (1998: 264) also contends that this visual turn was not confined to Mahāyāna Buddhism but was "a pan-Indic phenomenon beginning around the first or second century BCE—the same time as the emergence of writing."

According to McMahan (1998: 254), "writing was crucial to the development and character of the Mahāyāna" and it "contributed to a restructuring of knowledge in such a way that vision, rather than hearing, became a significant mode of access to knowledge."[37] McMahan (1998: 273) then goes on to conclude "first, [that] the Mahāyāna tended to emphasize vision to a greater extent than the orthodox traditions, who emphasized hearing, and second, that these respective orientations were specifically involved with each tradition's claims to authority and legitimacy."

While the visual figures prominently in the *Divyāvadāna*, so too, following McMahan's hypothesis, do literacy and writing. In a stereotypical passage that occurs throughout the *Divyāvadāna*, the first step of a young boy's education is that he is "entrusted [to a teacher to learn] writing."[38] This process is made explicit in the *Svāgata-avadāna*. As a young boy, Svāgata begins his education when an old maid "entrusts him to a writing teacher to learn the letters,"[39] and he goes off to study as a day student at a "writing school."[40] In the *Rūpāvatī-avadāna*, a young boy's initiation into writing is shown to occur with great pomp, lending support to the idea that this marked an important rite of passage. It is said that when Candraprabha turned eight years old, "his parents gave him a proper bath, fully anointed him, adorned him with all kinds of ornaments, and . . . he was taught how to write."[41] This occurred in a writing school along with five hundred other boys. And in the *Sahsodgata-avadāna*, it is said that the young boy Sahasodgata "learned how to write and became an expert scribe,"[42] showing at least that there was such a designation.[43]

In addition to the importance that these avadānas assign to writing, encoded within at least one other *avadāna* is the primacy of writing over reciting—in

other words, of the written word over the oral word. In the *Cūḍāpakṣa-avadāna*, we read of two brothers: the older brother Mahāpanthaka (Highwayman) who is very intelligent, and the younger brother Panthaka (Bywayman) who is not. When Panthaka grew up,

> he was entrusted [to a teacher to learn] writing. [When he was asked to repeat *siddham*—"and so it is established"—] by the time *sid* was said to him he would forget *dham*.
>
> Now his instructor said [to the brahman who was Panthaka's father]. "Brahman, I have to teach many boys. I can't teach Panthaka. If a little is said to Mahāpanthaka he grasps a lot, but by the time *sid* is said to Panthaka he forgets *dham*."
>
> "Not all brahmans become skilled in scripts and letters," the brahman reflected. "He will be a brahman who just recites the Vedas."[44]

Panthaka, however, is also unskilled at Vedic recitation, unable to learn even the beginning of the Gāyatrī mantra—"by the time *om* was said to him he would forget *bhūḥ*, and when *bhūḥ* was said he would forget *om*."[45] And so his teacher reflects, "Not all brahmans become masters of the Vedas. He will be a brahman only by birth."[46]

Implicit in this story is a hierarchy of brahmans—the literate brahman is more clever than the oral brahman who just recites the Vedas, who in turn is more clever than a brahman by name only. Yet, this brahmanical hierarchy is overturned by what follows in the story. Although the unlettered Panthaka is a self-proclaimed idiot and fool, his brother Mahāpanthaka initiates him as a monk. Panthaka then spends the three months of the rainy season contemplating a single verse, but he still can't understand it. He is despondent. After Mahāpanthaka tries to teach his brother, Ānanda tries as well, but he too fails.

Finally, the Buddha offers him a half-verse to contemplate while he cleans the monks' sandals and shoes. While studying on his own, Panthaka comes to understand the half-verse and then directly experiences arhatship. Later, given the opportunity to teach many hundreds of thousands of beings, Panthaka offers a discourse on the dharma that instills *prasāda* in great numbers of people. As his attendant explains, "There wasn't anyone that the venerable one didn't instill with *prasāda*."[47] The Buddha then offers this explanation: "Monks, this monk Panthaka is foremost among those monks that are my disciples who are expert in transforming the minds of others."[48]

While many characters in the *Divyāvadāna* are sent off to writing instructors as a first step in an education that is no doubt intended to help them succeed in the world of commerce and business,[49] as this story makes clear, literacy is not essential for excelling within the world of Buddhist monasticism,

nor does writing play an important role in the ritual practices of monks.[50] This is not to contradict McMahan's hypothesis that the preponderance of the visual in the Mahāyāna is connected with a reliance on writing, only to problematize it. There are so many unanswered questions with regard to the advent and use of writing among Indian Buddhists, their choice of language, the nature and practices of the Mahāyāna, and the connection between all of these, that to connect the visionary character of Mahāyāna texts in any direct way with "the emergence of writing" is a difficult endeavor.

Though McMahan (1998: 273–274) argues that "the development of writing also shifted access to and organization of knowledge from an exclusively oral/aural mode to one that included visuality, and this allowed for greater analysis and commentary, as well as for dissent," it may be that the issue at stake is not the emergence of writing but the emergence of writing *in* Sanskrit. The first written texts in India appeared in the third century BCE in Prakrit, with Aśoka's rock edicts probably inaugurating the practice.[51] Then, in the early centuries of the Common Era, Sanskrit superseded Prakrit as the language for public and political documents.

This Sanskritic turn coincides with Buddhism's appropriation of Sanskrit to preserve the word of the Buddha (*buddhavacana*), even though this had been explicitly prohibited in the Pali *Vinaya* (Vin ii, 139) and averred for half a millennium. "Canonical texts from several centuries prior to this period," Sheldon Pollock (2006: 56) notes, "are found redacted in various forms of Middle Indic mixed with Sanskrit (sometimes called Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit), an idiom that seems less a failure to achieve Sanskrit than a continuing reluctance to use it fully."[52] This Sanskritic turn also coincides with the first Buddhist literature in Sanskrit, such as those texts "by Aśvaghoṣa, Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva and Mātṛceta whom tradition links with the reigns of the great Kuśāṇa emperors, from Kaniṣka to Vasudeva (ca 128–230 AD)" (Lamotte 1988: 585).[53]

Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita*, in particular, inaugurates the use of Sanskrit for the courtly epic (*mahākāvya*), and in contrast to the canonical writings of Indian Buddhism that precede Aśvaghoṣa's work, many of which possess features of oral literature (Allon 1997a, 1997b), the *Buddhacarita* contains an abundance of visual imagery. Darśana, as Reginald Ray (1994: 52) notes, "occupies an important place in Aśvaghoṣa's soteriology."[54]

Though Aśvaghoṣa links together a new form of literacy with a nascent visual culture, it doesn't necessarily follow that writing is indicative of certain modes of thinking or, more specifically, that the visual in language is somehow a *mark* of literacy. As for the former, Jack Goody's (1968, 1987) arguments with regard to writing and literacy in India have been the subject of much dispute. Jonathan Parry (1985: 201; cf. Falk 1990) notes that "the striking thing about

this catalogue of corollaries that Goody derives from literacy is that . . . almost none of his predictions holds unambiguously good for traditional India." As for the latter, the notion promoted by scholars such as Walter Ong (1967, 1982) that the shift from an oral culture to a "chirographic" one based on writing and then to a typographic one entrenches a visual bias is, as even the sympathetic Martin Jay (1994: 2, 66–69) notes, somewhat grandiose and hyperbolic. Other scholars have been less reserved in their criticisms.[55]

Writing may have been a factor in the development of a Mahāyāna visuality, but that only provides us with part of the answer. What Schopen (1999: 312) opines about the origin of the Mahāyāna holds equally well regarding the origin of the visual character of the Mahāyāna: "we are . . . well beyond—or should be—looking for single causes for the emergence or 'rise' of what is clearly not a single thing." So what are these multiple causes?

Changes in Buddhist material culture, such as the occurrence of the first iconic images of the Buddha, the proliferation of monastic establishments, and the development of trading routes that offered access to both, offer some explanations. In the pages that follow, I explore nine additional possibilities.

1. The visual component of Mahāyāna texts may, as Paul Harrison (2003: 142) suggests, be the result of "a convergence of meditation and transmission in the forest environment." Harrison (2003: 135) explains that "these new texts may well have been the work of meditators who were also involved in the business of textual transmission, who, in their visions, encountered new revelations which they later committed to writing." The visual aspect of their writing, in other words, is a residue, intentional or otherwise, of their visionary experiences.
2. Perhaps the dependence of the *Divyāvadāna* on visual tropes and phenomena reflects a disruption in oral communication during the period that gave rise to the text. For example, these stories may have been addressed toward people with a wide range of language practices. Visual culture often emerges where other signs fail.[56] Such a condition can lead to the emergence of an "intercultural zone" (Dening 1996) in which there is a necessary surface truth to phenomena. It has been suggested that films have such a transparency;[57] perhaps the same holds true for the corpus of stories in the *Divyāvadāna*.
3. Another possibility is that this dependence on the visual reflects an attempt to convey religious narratives to an illiterate community. Parallels are suggested in Michael Baxandall's (1988: 41) work on Christian practices in fifteenth-century Italy.

4. The language and diction of these stories could itself be at issue (Marouzeau 1911; Agrawal 1964; Chaki 1993). Much is still unknown with regard to the social function of the Buddhist Sanskrit in which the *Divyāvadāna* is written, but it seems likely that it was meant to be understood widely. Perhaps its inclusivity, however, created a hybrid that could be understood by many but would necessarily be obscure and imprecise at different times for different linguistic communities—hence, a dependence on the visual. While Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita*, which is written in standard Sanskrit, also possesses many visual traits, the cause of such tropes in one text need not be the cause of them in another.[58]
5. Donald Lopez (1995: 41) suggests that "the virtual explosion of texts by which we mark the rise of the Mahāyāna . . . with their self-consciousness and often exaltation of their own status as texts, as physical objects" may indicate that "the importance of the writing of the sūtras . . . [had] less to do with what the sūtras say than with what they do." Perhaps early Mahāyāna movements wanted "not so much new teachings as new centers of worship," and if Schopen (1975) is right about the cult of the book, then the book might have fulfilled "the desire for restored presence, physically standing for his speech, manifest as the body of his teaching" (Lopez 1995: 41). As Lopez (1995: 41–42) concludes,

   > Sūtras may have been written (down) before, but here was a new reason for their writing. While writing might be condemned as derivative and displaced from the animation of speech (and, in this sense, dead), these dead letters could be also valued precisely because they were dead, the leftover, dispersed (and dispersible) remnants of the living Buddha, suitable for framing in a stūpa, as the Lotus [Sūtra] recommends.

   Hence, the visual character of these texts may have something to do with their function as visual objects.
6. The nineteenth-century historian Heinrich Graetz (1975: 68) surmised that Hellenic culture was fundamentally visual in its orientation and Hebraic culture fundamentally auditory, the former considering the divine to appear within nature and the latter considering the divine to exist beyond or outside of nature. As David Chidester (1992: xi) explains,

   > The visual mode, therefore, lends itself to a sensitivity to that which is immanent in the world; the verbal mode lends itself

> to the experience of a transcendent and invisible authority that speaks over against human beings and commands obedience.

Perhaps then the visual turn concerned making the transcendent more immanent, making the otherworldly more this-worldly—bringing the Buddha to the here and now.

7. Since many of the stories in the *Divyāvadāna* seem to have been derived from the monastic legal materials of the vinaya, perhaps there is a link between the language of law and evidence as a visual phenomenon. In his work on law and the phenomenology of sight, the legal scholar Bernard Hibbitts (1994) has argued convincingly that there is a "perceived 'fit' between the values of traditional legal theory and the values said to be supported by visual phenomenology."
8. In addition, since the production of the *Divyāvadāna* seems to have roughly coincided in time and place with the production of the first buddha images, perhaps these images and the textual pictures in the text were doing work similar to that of cinema in its infancy. As Susan Buck-Morss (1994: 52) writes of Eisenstein,

> Against initial resistance of audiences not yet used to the new cinematic prosthesis, Eisenstein tried to make visible such abstract realities as capital, class oppression, and, most especially, the mass as the collective agent of the new historical events. The particular characteristics of the screen as a cognitive organ enabled audiences not only to "see" this new collective protagonist, but (through eidetic reduction) to "see" the idea of the unity of the revolutionary people, the collective sovereignty of the masses, the idea of international solidarity, the idea of revolution itself.

9. And last, a dependence on the visual may have facilitated a synoptic spatialization of knowledge, such that causality could be isolated and the huge time gaps that often separate an act and its result could be easily conceptualized. This can be seen in numerous textual pictures within the *Divyāvadāna* that portray the various effects of karma. This can also be seen in modern Indian chromolithographs representing karma, images that show an individual misbehaving in this world and then suffering the consequences in the next world. These images, with labels such as "Doing-Bearing" (*karṇī bharṇī*), "The Abode of Hell" (*narakvā*), and "Yama's World" (*yamalok*), are frequently sold in North Indian bazaars.[59]

My point here, however, isn't simply to enumerate individual answers but to warn against simplifying and essentializing the task at hand—making sense

of the visual and its connection to giving as well as the aesthetic that gives meaning to that dynamic. Trying to isolate the problem offers little solace. The cultural transformations that occurred, which allowed Sanskrit to become a powerfully cosmopolitan language around the beginning of the first millennium, and the political and economic formations that allowed trade, trade routes, and Buddhism to thrive, all in close proximity, most likely played a role in the development of these phenomena. As Hans Belting (1994: 3) notes,

> Holy images were never the affair of religion alone, but also always of society, which expressed itself in and through religion. Religion was far too central a reality to be, as in our day, merely a personal matter or an affair of the churches.

In short, there are no easy answers.

Conclusion

In summary, while *śraddhā* and *prasāda* play an important role in the workings of the visual world of the *Divyāvadāna*, the visual dimension of the text easily exceeds these confines. Though *prasāda* may not have been a particularly efficacious practice for monastics, the story of Koṭikarṇa represents monastics as nonetheless having a strong desire to see the Buddha. Seeing the Buddha, it is said, complements the experience of seeing the dharma, and this desire to see the Buddha is represented as normative.

For Koṭikarṇa, however, the result of seeing the Buddha is not a personally and karmically transformative experience as it is in the practice of *prasāda*. Koṭikarṇa doesn't even engage with the Buddha actively as a visual object. Instead, the Buddha is engaged with as a presiding authority. Koṭikarṇa uses the occasion of seeing the Buddha to reiterate various texts, rules, and regulations so that the Buddha can legitimate them. Though Koṭikarṇa claims that he wants to see the Buddha's physical form to complement his vision of the Buddha's dharmic form, the former seems to be in service of the latter. What matters to Koṭikarṇa is that he has correctly seen the Buddha's dharma. Seeing the Buddha's physical form, though clearly an important trope, merely allows Koṭikarṇa to corroborate his dharmic vision.

But how does one see the Buddha's physical form after he has passed into final nirvāṇa? Two accounts from the Aśoka cycle of stories offer two different answers. King Aśoka sees the Buddha by going on pilgrimage to sites associated with the Buddha's life, and once there, looking at those who had in turn looked at the Buddha and listening to their descriptions of him. These sites,

it seems, allow for a unique spatial link to the Buddha, and the eyewitnesses associated with them provide a visual lineage and, hence, visual conduit to the Buddha himself. For Aśoka, being in such a site, seeing such a person, and listening to descriptions of the Buddha, or some combination of these events, brings the Buddha into visual focus. Words alone are not enough, and nor is seeing. The Bodhi tree, however, is an exception. It is both site and witness, a silent and visual gateway to the Buddha himself. And in response to these apparitions, as to be expected, Aśoka makes offerings.

Though Aśoka is instrumental in distributing the Buddha's relics, he visually accesses the Buddha not through any of the eighty-four thousand *dharmarājikā*s that he has had constructed but through the unmarked sites associated with his life. It is a choice of deeds over bones. Aśoka's offerings at these unmarked sites, however, seem to create another system of shrines, a counterpart to the *dharmarājikā*s, that will allow others to honor and see the Buddha following Aśoka's example. In short, Aśoka offers a rationale and personal endorsement for pilgrimage to sites associated with the Buddha's life, and he also establishes markers and shrines at these sites to make his paradigmatic pilgrimage that much easier to emulate.

Like Koṭikarṇa, the monk Upagupta has seen the Buddha's dharmic form and now desires to see his physical form, but like Aśoka, he cannot do so directly, for by this time the Buddha has already passed into final nirvāṇa. Relying on neither pilgrimage nor visual legacies or descriptive verses, Upagupta instead relies on Māra, the satanic tempter, whom he has recently saddled with a garland of carcasses. As a condition for releasing him from this fleshly burden, Upagupta requests Māra to manifest the form of the Buddha so that he may finally behold the Buddha's physical form. Māra does so, impersonating the Buddha with fantastic detail, but seeing Māra in the guise of the Buddha is not the same as seeing the Buddha himself. To this end, Upagupta then utilizes Māra's image of the Buddha so that he can manifest an image of the Buddha in own mind through the practice of *buddhānusmṛti*. Only then does he see the Buddha.

Gazing at Māra in the guise of the Buddha while maintaining a vision of the Buddha in his mind, Upagupta then bows down before Māra, causing the latter to recoil in fear, afraid that his life is in jeopardy as the object of Upagupta's devotion. But this is not the case. As Upagupta explains, images have an instrumental value for the practitioner. When one venerates an image of the gods, one's devotion goes toward the gods, not toward the material image itself. Hence, for Upagupta, Māra's impersonation of the Buddha is a tool to be used in the practice of *buddhānusmṛti*, so that the Buddha may be envisioned, and in the practice of prostration, so that the Buddha may be honored.

Considering the prevalence and prominence of this trope of seeing the Buddha's physical form, questions arise as to whether Buddhist devotees, at a time after the Buddha's final nirvāṇa, also desired to see him, particularly after hearing these stories. And if they did, how was this desire fulfilled? Following Upagupta's method seems improbable, but perhaps Aśoka's pilgrimage to sites closely connected with the Buddha's life offers a more emulative practice. This raises the difficulty, though, of meshing what we know of Buddhist ritual practices through texts and ethnographies with the physical remains of art and architecture at Buddhist monuments, whether they be sites associated with the Buddha's life, such as Sarnath, or those associated with his later political legacy, such as Sanchi.

One problem with meshing Buddhist stories, Buddhist practice, and Buddhist monuments, however, is that if as a result of listening to Buddhist stories one were to go to Buddhist pilgrimage sites to see the Buddha, one would find that many famous stories were represented but that they were extraordinarily difficult to see and decipher—not the proper tools for the practice of *buddhānusmṛti*. But the theatrical displays that the tree deity and the nāga chief Kālika perform for Aśoka, and that Māra performs for Upagupta, may offer an exemplary model. Perhaps pilgrims to these sites would have been offered a theater of images, words, and gestures to bring the Buddha to life before their eyes. This manifestation, combined with the animating force of stūpas themselves, and with a similar force from representations of these narratives, would have helped to create an object of devotion for the devotees. And then, with devotional object in place, the requisite offerings could be made and, in turn, the corresponding rewards promised.

While much of this is conjecture, a temeritous attempt to reconstruct practices and aesthetics, social relations and intellectual formations, the visual world of the text is clearly more than an "affair of religion alone," to cite Belting again. In the *Divyāvadāna,* Buddhist dharma applies to the religious and the secular, though no effort is made to distinguish between the two. Whether householder, merchant, brahman, or monastic, whether at work, at home, or in a monastery, Buddhist dharma applies with equal rigor and certitude. As the text repeatedly explains,

> Actions never come to naught,
> even after hundreds of millions of years.
> When the right conditions gather and the time is right,
> then they will have their effect on embodied beings.[60]

Hence, explaining the visual in the *Divyāvadāna,* as well as its connection with the karmically efficacious states of *śraddhā* and *prasāda,* requires

a sensitivity to a host of social, intellectual, and cultural phenomena. David McMahan is no doubt right to connect the visual turn of the Mahāyāna with the emergence of writing, for Buddhism's appropriation of Sanskrit and its hybrids marked a key moment in its public and political development. But writing and Sanskrit explain only part of the picture. Seeing in the *Divyāvadāna* is so closely connected with the tropes and residue of mercantilism that no complete picture will emerge without considering the economics of the visual turn.

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Epilogue

The task of the narrator is not an easy one, he said. He appears to be required to choose his tale from among the many that are possible. But of course that is not the case. The case is rather to make many of the one. Always the teller must be at pains to devise against his listener's claim—perhaps spoken, perhaps not—that he has heard the tale before. He set forth the categories into which the listener will wish to fit the narrative as he hears it. But he understands that the narrative is itself in fact no category but is rather the category of all categories for there is nothing which falls outside its purview. All is telling. Do not doubt it.

—Cormac McCarthy, *The Crossing*

In the *Divyāvadāna*, the visual, moral, and market economies interpenetrate, such that seeing, believing, giving, and buying work together to constitute the ethical field of Buddhism. This interpenetration enables certain transpositions and conversions, such as merit for money and the converse, and these allow for phenomena such as market morality, karmic materialism, and *prasāda*-initiated giving. The activities and domains of Buddhist morality are therefore expansive: very little is outside the purview of Buddhist ethics.

While others have noted the longstanding connection between god and gold and how "the go(l)d standard is the base upon which everything rests" (Taylor 1999: 11), this intersection and the logic by which it abides is exceptionally clear in the *Divyāvadāna*. In the

Koṭikarṇa-avadāna, for example, it is said that "the whole world has *śraddhā* in gold," for according to the logic of the gold standard of the karmic system, wealth is a reliable indicator of merit and virtue, and it is worthy of our trust. In fact, just as "IN GOD WE TRUST" is written on U.S. currency, making explicit the connection between money and religion, so too in the *Divyāvadāna* gold bespeaks a trust in god—or at least in karma—rendering wealth close to divine. Those who are "rich, wealthy, and prosperous,"[1] after all, are frequently said in the text to have amassed a wealth like the god Vaiśravaṇa and to rival him in riches.[2]

This close connection between morality, market, and money is helpful for understanding not just early Indian Buddhism but also the Buddhism of today. If Buddhist morality can become a market, why shouldn't the commercial market, or even the currency of that market, become another domain of Buddhism? Alan Klima (2004: 452) notes that after the crash of the Thai baht in 1997, "it is not geographical boundaries that are the first object of nationalistic focus anymore but the currency itself which is the new 'territory' to be developed and defended, and which transmits the feeling of being bound in a common identity and fate." Money, not land, becomes the vehicle through which the nation is constituted, and Buddhism provides the affective force.

Such examples of moral/market/money convergences are hardly restricted to Buddhism. Similar connections between religion and the marketplace are common enough, and since Weber's work on the Protestant values of capitalism, scholars have begun to recognize the importance of these connections for understanding religion, politics, economics, and consumer culture.[3] There is even a recent spate of books that advocate using religion for extracting oneself from the marketplace, including "Buddhist writings on greed, desire, and the urge to consume," as a subtitle of one such work explains.[4]

Trying to understand the significance of such connections in the *Divyāvadāna* is trying indeed. The numerous instances I have described of seeing, believing, and giving are not simply illustrations of a rote moral or socioeconomic framework. If that were so, then by explicating this framework the illustrations would be rendered superfluous or redundant. But this is not the case. These illustrations also occupy a more forceful position. They are part of exempla, stories to live by, models for being in the world. They are the word of the Buddha in their recensions in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya,* if not the *Divyāvadāna* itself, and nearly two millennia ago they also possessed considerable didactic and hegemonic force as instructional tales. If my assessment is correct, they were told to monastics and the laity, and they were instrumental in educating and disciplining both, particularly the latter, to be Buddhist subjects. Hence, they are the raw material of the framework and also illustrative

of its principles and values. They are, as Marilyn Strathern (1990: 38) writes of material objects, "at once 'nature' and 'culture' in relation to system."

Yet, the frameworks that I have begun to elucidate for these examples, particularly with regard to the visual, don't easily contain all these illustrations. The systems of *śraddhā* and *prasāda* help to explain the nexus of seeing, believing, and giving, but they are insufficient for mapping out a social world in its complexity. It isn't just an either-or question of whether the visual and its various conjunctions with giving are either symptomatic of some large-scale social changes or the cause of them, a question of whether the infrastructure causes the superstructure or the reverse. Both forces are at work. These interconnected phenomena of seeing, believing, and giving are symptomatic of large-scale social, political, and economic changes, though the extent of these changes is unclear, and they are also a cause of such changes. This is the power of stories. In South Asia, as A. K. Ramanujan (1991: 43) notes, "stories are told performatively—they are not merely utterances, they are part of the action, they change its course . . . they affect *addressee*."

Words are not enough, though, to explain these phenomena and institutions. In his work on the use of images among the Usen Barok people of central New Ireland, Roy Wagner (1986a: 216, 221) explains how images help constitute verbal worlds, though words can never explain away the force of these images:

> A true image, like a metaphor (and a metaphor is a verbal image—an iconic use of language), can never be adequately glossed. It must be experienced in order to be understood, and the experience of its effect is at once its meaning and its power . . . [T]he esoteric world of power and meaning that vivifies and mystifies the Barok . . . is a world of image, in which the verbal capability, however ultimately necessary, is ancillary; the manifestation or production of unusual (or provocative) images evidences uncanny power, and power in the world is apprehended through the presence of such manifestations or appearance.

In short, a discursive explanation cannot explain away the experience of the visual in the *Divyāvadāna*. But what is that experience?

The *Divyāvadāna* recounts what individuals do when they see objects, and how states of belief mediate between seeing and doing. Unlike Buddhist *abhidharma* texts that describe in painstaking detail the intricacies of Buddhist psychology, the mental mechanics, for example, of how one sees, the *Divyāvadāna* explains instead what individuals *do* when they see. The text is more anthropological than psychological, and as a result I follow a more " 'action'-centred

approach" (Gell 1998: 6), examining the visual interactions between individuals and objects and the role of seeing and objects in social processes. The text concerns itself with how agency is mediated in these interactions, how seeing can be beneficial and how objects can transfer power, hence it resists a more psychoanalytic approach that focuses on mental states or a Marxist approach that focuses on objects. The visual world of the *Divyāvadāna* is not regulated by "Cartesian perspectivalism" (Jay 1994: 69), the visual regime that dominates in modern Europe, and it cannot be parsed effectively within the confines of that scopic regime. It is, instead, a complex visual economy that values seeing as the epistemic warrant for the truthfulness of tenets and practices and attaches great moral value to the act of seeing certain image-objects. Such is the visual world of the *Divyāvadāna*.

The power of seeing in the *Divyāvadāna*, the particular mechanisms for channeling and accruing agency in this visual system, is particularly apparent in my analysis of *prasāda*. When seen, *prāsādika* objects cause *prasāda* to arise in a wide variety of people. It isn't clear, though, whether this is because all of these people are susceptible to the power of *prāsādika* objects or because *prāsādika* objects overpower all these subjectivities. Is everyone hardwired to respond to such sights/sites, or is the spectacle of these objects so intense that it overrides everyone's circuits? If the latter is the case, as I think it is, then in the same way that pornography, according to Catherine MacKinnon, makes all men sexual predators, *prāsādika* objects make everyone *prasāda*-ized. These objects create Buddhist subjects. This, it could be argued, is their function.

This mechanism of *prasāda*, in addition to creating Buddhist subjects, also suggests that as a subject the Buddha is fragmentary. The Buddha is an "agent of *prasāda*" in person but also in object, both before and after his final nirvāṇa. He possesses what Gell terms a "distributed personhood," in that his being is distributed "beyond the body-boundary" (1998: 104). His tongue (Divy 71.23), the clippings of his hair and nails (Divy 197.5–6), even an image of himself (Divy 68.5–6) can generate *prasāda* in others. Even after his death, a buddha is equally efficacious as a pile of bones (Divy 77.1; cf. Divy 379.19–20 and 469.3–4).

Within the mechanism of *prasāda*, the agency of a buddha can inhabit a body part or a representation. A buddha is an efficacious subject, whether he is part or whole, an image or even imagined (Divy 196.8–9). The personhood of a buddha is much like the figure of trope in Wagner's (1986b: 126) analysis—"wherever it appears, it is the same phenomenon; *it is holographic throughout the range*" (cf. Wagner 1991). The part/whole distinction does not apply. The Buddha is a fractured hologram, distributed among at least eighty-four thousand stūpas, thanks to Aśoka's efforts, yet each fragment exerts the same social force as the totality. As an agent of change, the Buddha is manifold.

What is special about the Buddha, however, is not just his particular status as a distributed person, but the forms of seeing that he engenders. As a *prāsādika* object, the Buddha causes *prasāda* to arise in almost everyone who sees him. This form of seeing involves a minimum of mental intermediation on the part of the viewer. It requires no previous learning or mental preparation, no affiliation or initiation. It is immediate and tactile, an experience that Pinney (2002) terms "corpothetic," and it generates in the viewer an un-self-conscious and almost compulsive urge to give. To see a *prāsādika* object is to be touched and transformed by an intimate experience of the Buddha's presence. What is created, to quote Pinney (2002: 357; citing Taussig 1993: 24), is "a visceral domain in which objects become sensorily emboldened in a 'magical technology of embodied knowing.' "

But this is not the only form of seeing in the *Divyāvadāna*. In the discourse of *śraddhā*, seeing is a self-conscious act of verification that enables one to grasp the truth of phenomena, such as the system of karma and the karmic efficacy of making offerings to monastics. Though visual confirmation is a necessary cause for the arising of *śraddhā*, it is not a sufficient one. One needs to see an object before one's eyes, then a knowledgeable other is needed to explain it. Seeing must be supplemented with hearing. One's own visions must be supplemented with the words of another.

This dependency—of the visual on the aural, of one's own efforts on those of another—is also present in the story of Aśoka. As Upagupta leads Aśoka to sites associated with the Buddha's life, Aśoka is able to see the Buddha by looking at visual proxies of the Buddha, those who had seen the Buddha before his final nirvāṇa, and listening to poetic descriptions that bring the Buddha to life. As in the case of *śraddhā*, it is a theater of sights and sounds, what one sees and what another says, that creates an efficacious experience. Visitors to Buddhist monasteries and stūpas quite likely experienced, and continue to experience, a similar multimedia embrace of images seen and stories heard. Without stories, the sculptures and paintings at Buddhist sites are often undecipherable, much like the wheel of existence in the *Sahasodgata-avadāna* that baffles viewers until a competent monk is appointed to explain its meaning. Only then can viewers see it correctly.

While seeing alone is sufficient for the arising of *prasāda*, it is not sufficient in these other cases. One needs words—poetic descriptions of the Buddha's form, accounts of the Buddha's previous lives, and karmic stories that explain the results of good and bad deeds. One needs, it seems, avadānas. Though it is hardly surprising that a genre of literature would attempt to justify its own existence, this justification does tell us something about the world that these avadānas wanted to create. It was a world in which seeing was a crucial aspect

of Buddhist practice, and listening to stories the complementary act that made visual experience meaningful.

In "Narrative, Sub-Ethics, and the Moral Life" (1996), Charles Hallisey and Anne Hansen explain that Buddhist stories have, as Ramanujan noted, a performative value, that both telling them and listening to them can be a transformative experience. In exploring this aspect of Buddhist literature and practice, they ask the following question: "What did Buddhists learn from their stories and how did they learn from them" (1996: 310)? In response, Hallisey and Hansen offer an insightful analysis of "different ways in which moral life is enabled by narrative" (1996: 308), and their work testifies to the complex moral power that Buddhist stories can convey. But more questions also need to be asked of Buddhist stories, questions that help to situate the telling and listening of stories within social practice. What, for example, did Buddhists want their stories to do and how was this meant to be done? This is not an easy question, involving as it does the establishment of a Buddhist establishment, but it is a crucial one for Buddhist social and cultural history. In the preceding chapters I have tried, in part, to answer this question; I hope that my efforts will now inspire others to do the same.

Appendix

Contents of the Divyāvadāna

1. *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna:* The Story of Koṭikarṇa
2. *Pūrṇa-avadāna:* The Story of Pūrṇa
3. *Maitreya-avadāna:* The Story of Maitreya
4. *Brāhmaṇadārikā-avadāna:* The Story of a Brahman's Daughter
5. *Stutibrāhmaṇa-avadāna:* The Story of a Brahman's Panegyric
6. *Indrabrāhmaṇa-avadāna:* The Story of a Brahman Named Indra
7. *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna:* The Story of a Woman Dependent on a City for Alms
8. *Supriya-avadāna:* The Story of Supriya
9. *Meṇḍhakagṛhapativibhūti-pariccheda:* The Chapter on the Great Fortune of the Householder Meṇḍhaka
10. *Meṇḍhaka-avadāna:* The Story of Meṇḍhaka
11. *Aśokavarṇa-avadāna:* The Story of Aśokavarṇa
12. *Prātihārya-sūtra:* The Miracle Sūtra
13. *Svāgata-avadāna:* The Story of Svāgata
14. *Sūkarika-avadāna:* The Story of a Wretched Pig
15. *Cakravartivyākṛta-avadāna:* The Story of One Foretold to Be a Wheel-Turning King
16. *Śukapotaka-avadāna:* The Story of Two Parrot Chicks
17. *Māndhātā-avadāna:* The Story of Māndhātā
18. *Dharmaruci-avadāna:* The Story of Dharmaruci
19. *Jyotiṣka-avadāna:* The Story of Jyotiṣka
20. *Kanakavarṇa-avadāna:* The Story of Kanakavarṇa
21. *Sahasodgata-avadāna:* The Story of Sahasodgata
22. *Candraprabhabodhisattvacaryā-avadāna:* The Story of the Deeds of the Bodhisattva Candraprabha

23. *Saṅgharakṣita-avadāna:* The Story of Saṅgharakṣita, Part 1
24. *Nāgakumāra-avadāna:* The Story of a Nāga Prince
25. *Saṅgharakṣita-avadāna:* The Story of Saṅgharakṣita, Part 2
26. *Pāṃśupradāna-avadāna:* The Story of a Gift of Dirt
27. *Kunāla-avadāna:* The Story of Kunāla
28. *Vītaśoka-avadāna:* The Story of Vītaśoka
29. *Aśoka-avadāna:* The Story of Aśoka
30. *Sudhanakumāra-avadana:* The Story of Prince Sudhana
31. *Toyikāmaha-avadāna:* The Story of the Toyikā Festival
32. *Rūpāvatī-avadāna:* The Story of Rūpāvatī
33. *Śārdūlakarṇa-avadāna:* The Story of Śārdūlakarṇa
34. *Dānādhikaraṇa-mahāyānasūtra:* The Mahāyāna Sūtra on the Topic of Giving
35. *Cūḍāpakṣa-avadāna:* The Story of a Good for Nothing
36. *Mākandika-avadāna:* The Story of Mākandika
37. *Rudrāyaṇa-avadāna:* The Story of Rudrāyaṇa
38. *Maitrakanyaka-avadāna:* The Story of Maitrakanyaka

Abbreviations

The following symbols are used in the Sanskrit, Pali, and Tibetan passages that are included in this work.

[ ]	This indicates a gap in the text that has been filled.
< >	This indicates a restoration or reconstruction based on another source.
Abhidh-k	*Abhidharmakośa*. See Dwarikadas Sastri 1987.
Abhidh-k-bh	*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. See Dwarikadas Sastri 1987.
Abhidh-k-vy	*Abhidharmakośavyākhyā*. See Dwarikadas Sastri 1987.
Abhidh-sam	*Abhidharmasamuccaya*. See Gokhale 1947.
Abhid-sam-bh	*Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya*. See Tatia 1976.
Ak	*Amarakośa*. See Haragovinda Sastri 1982.
AN	*Aṅguttara-nikāya*. See Morris and Hardy 1885–1900.
Ap	*Apadāna*. See Lilley 1925–1927.
As	*Aṭṭhasālinī*. See Muller 1979.
Aśokāv	*Aśokāvadāna*. See Mukhopadhyaya 1963.
AvŚ	*Avadānaśataka*. See Speyer 1906.
BhP	*Bhāgavatapurāṇa*. See J. L. Sastri 1983a.
BHSD	*Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary*. See Edgerton 1993.

Bv	*Buddhavaṃsa*. See Jayawickrama 1974.
BvA	*Buddhavaṃsa-aṭṭhakathā* [= *Madhuratthavilāsinī*]. See Horner 1978a.
Ch-Up	*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. See Gambhirananda 1992.
Ch-Up-bh	*Chāndogya Upaniṣad Bhāṣya*. See Panoli 1991.
CPD	*A Critical Pali Dictionary*. See Trenckner et al. 1924–.
Cūlv	*Cūlavaṃsa*. See Geiger 1925 and 1927.
D	Derge edition of the Tibetan Tripiṭaka.
Dhāt	*Dhātuvaṃsa*. See Nandaratana 1984.
Dhp	*Dhammapada*. See Carter and Palihawadana 1987.
Dhp-BHS	*Dharmapada*. See Shukla 1979.
Dhp-G	*Gāndhārī Dharmapada*. See Brough 1962.
Dhp-Pr	*Prakrit Dhammapada*. See Bhaskar 1990.
Dhp-a	*Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā*. See Norman 1906–1914.
Divy	*Divyāvadāna*. See Cowell and Neil 1886.
Divy-V	*Divyāvadāna*. See Vaidya 1959.
DN	*Dīgha-nikāya*. See Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1890–1911.
DNM	*Deśīnāmamālā*. See Pischel and Bühler 1880.
DPPN	*Dictionary of Pali Proper Names*. See Malalasekera 1995.
GM	*Gilgit Manuscripts*. See Dutt 1984.
It	*Itivuttaka*. See Windisch 1975.
Ja	*Jātaka*. See Fausbøll 1877–1896.
Jñ-pr	*Jñānaprasthānaśāstra*. See S. B. Sastri 1955.
Kv	*Kathāvatthu*. See Taylor 1894–1897.
Manu	*Manusmṛti* (*Mānavadharmaśāstra*). See J. L. Sastri 1983b.
MhB	*Mahābhārata*. See Sukthankar et al. 1933–1959.
Mil	*Milindapañha*. See Trenckner 1880.
MN	*Majjhima-nikāya*. See Trenckner and Chalmers 1888–1889.
Mp	*Manorathapūraṇī*. See Walleser and Kopp 1924–1957.
MPS	*Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*. See Waldschmidt 1951.
Mvy	*Mahāvyutpatti*. See Ishihama and Fukuda 1989.
MW	*A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. See Monier-Williams 1990.
N	Narthang edition of the Tibetan Tripiṭaka.
Nir	*Nirukta*. See Bhadkamkar 1942.
PJ I	*Paramatthajotikā I*. See Smith 1959.

Pp-A	*Puggalapaññatti-aṭṭhakathā*. See Landsberg and Rhys Davids 1914.
PSED	*The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. See Apte 1986.
PTSD	*The Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary*. See Rhys Davids and Stede 1986.
RatA	*Ratnamālāvadāna*. See Takahata 1954.
Saddhp	*Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra*. See Dutt 1986.
Saṅghabh	*Saṅghabhedavastu*. See Gnoli 1977–1978.
Śay-v	*Śayanāsanavastu*. See Gnoli 1978.
Śikṣ	*Śikṣāsamuccaya*. See Bendall 1897–1902.
Skt.	Sanskrit
SN	*Saṃyutta-nikāya*. See Féer 1884–1898.
Sv	*Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*. See Rhys Davids, Carpenter, and Stede 1886–1932.
Th	*Theragāthā*. See Oldenberg and Pischel 1966.
Th-a	*Theragāthā-aṭṭhakathā* [= *Paramatthadīpanī V*]. See Woodward 1940–1959.
trans.	translator or translated
Thūp	*Thūpavaṃsa*. See Jayawickrama 1971.
Ud	*Udāna*. See Steinthal 1885.
Ud-a	*Udāna-aṭṭhakathā* [= *Paramatthadīpanī I*]. See Woodward 1926.
Uttarar	*Uttararāmacarita*. See Kane 1962.
Uv	*Udānavarga*. See Bernhard 1965.
Vin	*Vinayapiṭaka*. See Oldenberg 1879–1883.
Vism	*Visuddhimagga*. See Warren 1950.

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Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. Skt., *evaṃ mayā śrutam;* Pali, *evaṃ me sutam*. For more on this expression, see Lamotte 1949–1989: 56–72 and Brough 1950.

2. For more on the nature and function of avadānas, see Lenz 2003; Prakash 1970; Salomon 1999; Sarkar 1981 and 1990; Sharma 1975 and 1985; Strong 1985; Thomas 1933; and Weeraratne 1966.

3. See, for example, Bailey's (1966) translation from the Khotanese; Chavannes's (1934: i, 292–304) translation from the Chinese; Horner and Jaini's (1985: i, 137–169) translation from the Pali; Schiefner's (1893) translation from the Tibetan; and Bhattacharya's (1898) translation of Kṣemendra's retelling in the *Avadānakalpalatā*.

4. Some notable exceptions include Brown 1997; Dehejia 1997; Eckel 1992; Matsumura 1985; and McMahan 2002.

5. For example, see Bundgaard 1999; Case 2000; Dalmia 2001; Davis 1997; Dehejia 2000; Desjarlais 2003; Dwyer and Pinney 2001; Granoff 2000; Granoff and Shinohara 2004; Guha-Thakurta 1995; Gutman 1982; Jain 2000; Jhala 1997; Kapur 1993; Kemper 2001; Mankekar 1999; Mazzarella 2003; Meister 1995; Pinney 1997a, 1997b, 2001, 2004; Rajagopal 2001; Ramaswamy 2003; Ryan 1997; Sanford 2002; Scott 1991; Srivatsin 2000; Stietencron 1977; and Uberoi 1990.

6. For a very good series of articles regarding photography and visual economies, see Pinney and Peterson 2003: 55–169.

7. Nevertheless, non-Buddhist practitioners in the *Divyāvadāna* can still acquire some spiritual attainments. In the *Prātihārya-sūtra*, for example, a mendicant named Subhadra is said to possess the five superhuman faculties (Divy 152.22–23).

8. In particular, Thompson (1991: 260) examines "the political culture, the expectations, tradition, and, indeed, superstitions of the working population most frequently involved in actions in the market. . . . "

9. As Greenough (1982: 270) notes, however, "It is absurd to think that Bengali peasants were unresponsive in the face of famine. 'Fatalism,' the uncomplaining surrender to death by starving victims, is in fact the most obvious piece of evidence we have for an active Bengali adaptation to the famine. This was an adaptation, however, which succeeded only by imposing mortality upon some person in order to secure the survival of others."

10. Divy 291.22, *dhārmiko babhūva dharmeṇa.*

11. Divy 291.23, *ekākino rahogatasya pratisaṃlīnasya.*

12. Divy 291.24–26, *yan nv ahaṃ sarvavaṇijo 'śulkān agulmān muñceyaṃ sarvajāmbudvīpakān manuṣyān akarān agulmān muñceyam iti.*

13. Divy 292.1–3, *tasy[ānenopāyena]*[a] *bahūni varṣāṇi rājyaṃ kārayato 'pareṇa samayena nakṣatraṃ viṣamībhūtaṃ dvādaśa varṣāṇi devo na varṣiṣyati.*

[a]Following Divy-V 181.5. Divy 292.1, "in many ways" (*anekopāyena*), presumably "in many *wrong* ways."

14. Divy 293.15–17, *sarvajambudvīpād annādyaṃ parikṣīṇam anyatra rājñaḥ kanakavarṇasyaikā mānikā bhaktasyāvaśiṣṭā.*

15. Divy 294.22–27, *sa bhagavān pratyekabuddhaḥ sarvajambudvīpād annādyaṃ parikṣīṇam anyatra rājñaḥ kanakavarṇasyaikā mānikā bhaktasyāvaśiṣṭā | tasyaitad abhavat | yan nv ahaṃ rājānaṃ kanakavarṇam anukampeyaṃ yan nv ahaṃ rājñaḥ kanakavarṇasya niveśanāt piṇḍapātam apahṛtya paribhuñjīya.*

16. Divy 296.5–8, *anumodata yūyaṃ grāmaṇyo 'yaṃ rājñaḥ kanakavarṇasyāpaścima odanātisargaḥ | anena kuśalamūlena sarvajāmbudvīpakānāṃ manuṣyāṇāṃ dāridryasamucchedaḥ syāt.*

17. Divy 297.10–14, *idam evaṃrūpaṃ bhojanam odanaśaktavaḥ kulmāṣamatsyamāṃsam idam evaṃrūpaṃ khādanīyaṃ mūlakhādanīyaṃ skandhakhādanīyaṃ patrakhādanīyaṃ puṣpakhādanīyaṃ phalakhādanīyaṃ tilakhādanīyaṃ khaṇḍaśarkaraguḍakhādanīyaṃ piṣṭakhādanīyam.*

18. Divy 297.25–27, *sarvam asya rājñaḥ kanakavarṇasyānubhāvena jāmbudvīpakānāṃ manuṣyāṇāṃ dāridryamsamucchedo babhūva.*

19. Much the same could be said about King Aśoka. He followed the dharma—at least he professed to do so in his inscriptions—he implemented taxes, and he helped India become "a thriving and prosperous kingdom" (Thapar 1961). Nevertheless, in one of his pillar inscriptions, King Aśoka exempts the village of Lumbini from paying taxes because the Buddha had been born there (Barua and Chaudhury 1990: 38). A proper *dharmarāja*, it seems, can revoke the taxes for a village but not for an entire nation. Still, in the *Candraprabhabodhisattvacaryā-avadāna*, the bodhisattva King Candraprabha rules a kingdom, more or less successfully, in which no taxes were paid (Divy 316.10). But can *dharmarāja*s really be bodhisattvas and vice versa?

20. The insights one gains in meditation may very well contravene royal laws and norms.

21. In the *Divyāvadāna*, this agricultural metaphor is explicit. For example, in a trope that occurs a number of times in the text, the Buddha observes the world and

comes to know the answers to many questions: among them, "For whom with roots of virtue unplanted shall I plant them? For whom [with roots of virtue already] planted shall I cause them to mature? For whom [with roots of virtue already] matured shall I cause them to be released" (*kasyānavaropitāni kuśalamūlany avaropayeyam | kasyāvaropitāni paripācayeyam | kasya pakvāni vimocayeyam* | Divy 124.27–125.2)? As Richard Gombrich (2003: 428) notes, "the metaphor underlying the karma doctrine (not, of course, only in Buddhism) is agricultural: one sows a seed and reaps a harvest."

22. In the *Cūḍapakṣa-avadāna*, to cite one example, the young boy Mūṣikāhairaṇyaka takes a dead mouse and, acting on the advice of a guildmaster, uses it to barter and trade his way to a fortune. As a wealthy man, he then goes back to the guildmaster with a chest full of gold adorned with four jeweled mice to pay back his debt. As he presents these offerings, he explains, "This is your capital; this is your profit" (*idaṃ te mūlam ayaṃ lābhaḥ* | Divy 504.2–3).

23. Solitary buddhas are particularly good fields of merit for devotees to "plant" their meritorious deeds. "Thus," as John Strong (1989: 57) notes, "any good (or bad) action directed toward him can have positive (or negative) karmic results beyond all expectations." In the *Meṇḍhaka-avadāna*, for example, which contains another story of a famine, the householder Meṇḍhaka, his wife, son, daughter-in-law, servant, and maid each give the last portion of food that they possess to a solitary buddha. They then make fervent aspirations, all of which are fulfilled *immediately*. When the king hears of this, he exclaims: "Oh! This field is so fertile and faultless! A seed sown today bears fruit today as well" (*aho guṇamayaṃ kṣetraṃ sarvadoṣavivarjitam | yatroptaṃ vījam adyaiva adyaiva phaladāyakam* || Divy 135.12–13). Since the solitary buddha is such a fecund field of merit, the karmic results of their respective offerings are obtained on the same day rather than in, say, a subsequent lifetime.

24. Divy 298.2–7, *saced bhikṣavaḥ sattvā jānīyur dānasya phalaṃ dānasaṃvibhāgasya ca phalavipākaṃ yathāhaṃ jāne dānasya phalaṃ dānasaṃvibhāgasya ca phalavipākam apīdānīṃ yo 'sāv apaścimakaḥ kavaḍaś carama ālopas tato 'py adattvā 'saṃvibhajya na paribhuñjīran sacel labheran dakṣiṇīyaṃ pratigrāhakam.*

25. John Strong (1990: 121) nicely differentiates these two Buddhisms, explaining that there is "a nibbanic one oriented toward ending rebirth which emphasizes monkhood and meditation, and a kammatic one, which is satisfied with achieving a better rebirth and oriented toward the laity and merit-making." Strong (1990: 122) rightly notes, however, that giving—such as a gift of food—"is an act that is kammatic and nibbanic at the same time," thus calling into question any simple soteriological distinction between these two forms of Buddhism. Cf. Aronson 1979.

26. Divy 23.18–19, 192.14–15, 289.6–7, 313.223, etc., *āḍhye mahādhane mahābhoge kule*. For more on this "economics of salvation," see Walsh 2007.

27. Prayudh Payutto (1994: 76) likewise remarks that "the common tendency (in Thailand) [is] to praise people simply because they are rich, based on the belief," which he thinks is mistaken, "that their riches are a result of accumulated merit from previous lives."

28. See also Reynolds 1972 and Collins 1998: 414–496.

29. As Payutto (1994: 20) explains, "Ultimately, economics cannot be separated from Dhamma, because all the activities we associate with economics emerge from

the Dhamma. Economics is just one part of a vast interconnected whole, subject to the same natural laws by which all things function. Dhamma describes the workings of this whole, the basic truth of all things, including economics. If economics is ignorant of the Dhamma—of the complex and dynamic process of causes-and-effects that constitutes reality—then it will be hard pressed to solve problems, much less produce the benefits to which it aims."

30. The *Mahābhārata* also connects these three aims back to kingship. In Bhīṣma's instructions regarding the laws for kings, he explains that "the dharma of kings is the ultimate recourse for the entire sentient world. Hence the *trivarga* depends upon the dharma of kings" (*sarvasya jīvalokasya rājadharmāḥ parāyaṇam | trivargo 'tra samāsakto rājadharmeṣu* | Mbh 12.56.3–4; cf. trans. in Fitzgerald 2004: 296).

31. Kosambi 2000: 22, v. 51,

> *yasyāsti vittaṃ sa naraḥ kulīnaḥ sa paṇḍitaḥ sa śrutavān guṇajñaḥ |*
> *sa eva vaktā sa ca darśanīyaḥ sarve guṇāḥ kāñcanam āśrayanti ||*

32. For more on the importance of mercantilism in the formation of Indian Buddhism, see Rotman 2003a: chap. 1.

33. The *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* (no. 1), the *Pūrṇa-avadāna* (no. 2), the *Supriya-avadāna* (no. 8), the *Dharmaruci-avadāna* (no. 18), the *Sahasodgata-avadāna* (no. 21), the *Saṅgharakṣita-avadāna* (no. 23), the *Cūḍapakṣa-avadāna* (no. 35), the *Mākandika-avadāna* (no. 36), and the *Maitrakanyaka-avadāna* (no. 38).

34. See Chakravarti 1987 and Heitzman 1984. More recently, Greg Bailey and Ian Mabbett likewise acknowledge the connections between mercantilism and early Indian Buddhism, but they stake out a middle ground between "the claim that Buddhism favored merchant values" and the claim "that Buddhism was a counter or alternative to the materialist society of the new cities where money ruled" (2003: 25). Bailey and Mabbett wonder "why these classes *demanded* an intellectual contextualization and justification for their style of life" and, again, why they "experienced a *need* for intellectual validation" (2003: 24; italics added). Yet the driving force of the *Divyāvadāna*, at least in my reading, comes much more from the monastic side than the merchant side—it isn't simply the case that there was a merchant "need" and a monastic response—and the arguments mobilized are more practical than intellectual or theoretical.

35. The same could be said for Buddhism in China, where Buddhists and merchants likewise served each other's interests well (cf. Gernet 1995). Cynthia Brokaw's description of late imperial China sounds much like a description of India in the beginning of the Common Era, with Confucianism standing in for Hinduism. According to Brokaw (1991: 4), "Expanding economic opportunities had a profound impact on the social structure, both upsetting conventional definitions of the hierarchy and intensifying tensions between classes. Most noticeable was the elevation of the status of merchants. With the commercial growth of the period and the increasingly obvious power of money, merchants, though consigned in Confucian social theory of the bottom of the social scale, in fact enjoyed considerable power and social respectability."

36. For a compelling argument in this regard about how Buddhist history should be done, see Huntington 2007.

37. One might also say that they are more "believing in" than "believing that." As Slavoj Zizek (2001: 109) explains, "One can believe *in* ghosts without having faith in them, i.e. without believing *them* (considering them tricky and evil, not feeling bound to them by any pact or commitment); and, in a more tricky but crucial opposite case, one can *believe* (*have faith in*) X without *believing in* X." Cf. Hoffman 1985.

38. "Faith and belief," writes Geddes MacGregor (1987: 426), "often have been identified with each other. In medieval usage the Latin *fides* ('faith') generally means both. Even in the New Testament the distinction between the two is not entirely clear." While *śraddhā* is more like our notion of "belief" and *prasāda* more like "faith," both terms overflow these conceptual confines. For more on this distinction, see Smith 1979 and Southwold 1979.

39. Pnina Werbner and Helene Basu (1998: 5) likewise explain that in Islamic ritual, "practice and belief appear closely intertwined, grounded in ethical premises which remain largely implicit or mythically articulated. 'Belief' in this context can only be extrapolated from ritual action itself, or deciphered from fragmentary exegetic commentaries." See also Mahmood 2005: 153–167.

40. Likewise analyzing the market and its apparent self-evidence, Thomas Frank (2000: 68) writes, "There is a point in the life of ideas when they become natural, when they are accepted so universally that their history, the struggles that produced them, are forgotten as though they never happened. Although the sequence of events in which this transformation takes place remains obscure, by the mid-1990s market populism was clearly on its way to becoming naturalized."

41. For a preliminary discussion of the practice of *prasāda*, see Rotman 2003b.

42. According to Andrea Pinkney (personal communication), who is working on the evolution of *prasāda* in Sanskrit literature, *prasāda* likewise functions as a kind of "divine gift" throughout the epics, purāṇas, and tantras.

CHAPTER 1

1. Divy 131.13–14, 191.19–20, 282.17–18, 311.22–23, 504.23–24, 582.4–5, 584.20–21, etc.,

na praṇaśyanti karmāṇi kalpakoṭiśatair api |
sāmagrīṃ prāpya kālaṃ ca phalanti khalu dehinām ||

2. As England was "discovering" Buddhism in the nineteenth century (Almond 1988), Henry Alabaster argued that karma, which is perfect justice, must exist if there is a just god in heaven. This must be the case, Alabaster (1871: xviii) reasons, because the "belief that we are ruled by an unjust law, or by an unjust God, capable of having ever reserved His special love for peculiar people, or of visiting on children the sins of their fathers, is too horrible." For more on the truth and verifiability of karma, see Griffiths 1982 and White 1983.

3. *Ekphrasis*, as W. J. T. Mitchell (1994: 152) explains it, is "the verbal representation of visual representation." Henri Bergson (1960: 15; cited in Jay 1994: 202) offers a particularly vivid and poetic description of such verbal imagery: "The poet is he with whom feelings develop into images, and the images themselves into words which translate them while obeying the laws of rhythm. In seeing these images pass before our eyes we in our turn experience the feeling which was, so to speak, their emotional equivalent."

4. Divy 6.26–17.4. This summary is construed to highlight certain figures and tropes, such as the frequent absence of objects for *śraddhā* and *dakṣiṇā*. I will discuss these more fully in what follows.

5. Divy 7.28–8.2, *ke yūyaṃ bhavantaḥ kena vā karmaṇā ihopapannāḥ | śroṇa duṣkuhakā jāmbudvīpakā manuṣyā nābhiśraddadhāsyasi | ahaṃ bhavantaḥ pratyakṣadarśī kasmān nābhiśraddadhāsye*.

6. Divy 10.1, *ahaṃ pratyakṣadarśī kathaṃ nābhiśraddadhāsye*.

7. Here "moral code" is most likely synonymous with the five rules of training (*śikṣāpada*) that many lay Buddhists observe. One abstains from killing, from taking what is not given, and from engaging in sexual misconduct, false speech, and the use of intoxicants. For more, see Lamotte 1988: 69–71.

8. Divy 10.21–29, *sa tvayā vaktavyaḥ dṛṣṭas te mayā pitā kathayati aniṣṭo 'sya karmaṇaḥ phalavipāko viramāsmāt pāpakād asaddharmāt | bhoḥ puruṣa tvam evaṃ kathayasi duṣkuhakā jāmbudvīpakā manuṣyā iti nābhiśraddadhāsyati | śroṇa yadi na śraddadhāyati vaktayas tava pitā kathayati asisūnādhastāt suvarṇasya kalaśaḥ pūrayitvā sthāpitaḥ | tam uddhṛtyātmānaṃ samyaksukhena prīṇaya āryaṃ ca mahākātyāyanaṃ kālena kālaṃ piṇḍakena pratipādayāsmākaṃ ca nāmnā dakṣiṇām ādeśaya | apy evaitat karma tanutvaṃ parikṣayaṃ paryādānaṃ gacchet*.

9. While the former butcher's and adulterer's sons engage in the same evil act as had their fathers (i.e., butchering, adultery), the former brahman woman's daughter, unlike her mother, is a prostitute. The text here may somehow be equating making an improper fervent aspiration and prostitution.

10. Divy 8.3–4,

> *ākrośakā roṣakā vayaṃ matsariṇaḥ kuṭukuñcakā vayam |*
> *dānaṃ ca na dattam aṇv api yena vayaṃ pitṛlokam āgatāḥ ||*

11. Divy 9.3–4,

> *ārogyamadena mattakā ye dhanabhogamadena mattakāḥ |*
> *dānaṃ ca na dattam aṇv api yena vayaṃ pitṛlokam āgatāḥ ||*

12. Divy 9.15, *tābhiḥ sārdhaṃ krīḍati ramate paricārayati*. It may seem strange that as a reward for observing the moral code, particularly considering the third precept's prohibition against sexual misconduct, a hungry ghost should get to make love with divine nymphs. For mortals such an act would no doubt constitute an offense—though I haven't found any particular prohibition to that effect—since sexual misconduct with someone of superior moral qualities is said to be especially blameworthy (Bodhi 1978: 122; cf. Conze 1959: 71–72). Yet, for a hungry ghost to experience divine pleasures as a result of good deeds performed in a human incarnation is well attested in Pali literature (Collins 1998: 316–319). Still, it is seemingly incongruous to have sex as a reward for not having sex, particularly in the case of the adulterer.

13. Divy 13.17–18, *kasmāt sa muṇḍakaḥ śramaṇako busaplāvīṃ na bhakṣayatīti*.

14. Divy 13.23–24, *kasmāt sa muṇḍakaḥ śramaṇako 'yoguḍaṃ na bhakṣayatīti*.

15. Divy 14.4–5, *kiṃ svamāṃsaṃ na bhakṣayati yā tvadīyāni praheṇakāni bhakṣayatīti*.

16. Divy 14.13–14, *kiṃ nu pūyaśoṇitaṃ na bhakṣayati yā tvadīdāni praheṇakāni bhakṣayatīti*.

17. In many of the avadānas of the *Avadānaśataka*, as Strong (1979a: 230) has observed, "there is a direct correspondence—not necessarily between the physical act of devotion and the attainment of enlightened wisdom but between the physical act and the name (*nāma*) and physical form (*rūpakāya*) that the individual acquires at the time of his enlightenment. To the rupalogical act, then, corresponds a specific rupalogical fruit." Here too, demonstrating the rigors of karmic logic, there are frequently similarities in form between one's actions and the karmic results of such actions. The former brahman woman's husband, son, daughter-in-law, and maidservant are each faced with consuming the food that they damned the noble Mahākātyāyana to eat. I'm not sure, however, if there is a connection between being a butcher and being mauled by dogs or between being an adulterer and having one's head bitten off.

18. Divy 24.4–5, *kharavākkarma niścāritam*. The elevated language used to express this bad deed indicates that this term may have been a technical one like *pharusavācā*, the expression for "harsh speech" that is found in canonical Pali literature. In Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation of the *Brahmajāla-sutta* and extracts from its commentaries, the following gloss occurs: "'Harsh speech' is the definitely harsh volition occasioning bodily or vocal effort that cuts into the quick of another's heart. Though there is such effort cutting into the quick of another's heart, it does not count as harsh speech when it is backed by tenderness of mind" (1978: 124–125).

19. Divy 5.4, *apāyān kiṃ na paśyasīti*.

20. Divy 24.4–5, *yad anena mātur antike kharavākkarma niścāritaṃ tasya karmaṇo vipākena dṛṣṭa eva dharma apādā dṛṣṭā iti*.

21. Versions of the Koṭikarṇa narrative in Pali are also karma stories, but they don't contain a well-developed meta-narrative to convince the reader of the truth of karma. In the *Udāna-aṭṭhakathā* (Ud-a ii, 307–314; trans. in Masefield 1994b: 775–785), for example, there is a brief account of Kuṭikaṇṇa (Ud-a ii, 835–836n569) being left behind by his caravan and then setting off on his own and meeting up with hungry ghosts along the way. Though these meetings with hungry ghosts are quite similar to those that Koṭikarṇa has in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, no mention is made of seeing and its importance, and nothing is said of *saddhā* (the Pali spelling of *śraddhā*). Instead, the narrative is a personal account of Kuṭikaṇṇa's decision to go forth as a monk.

22. Divy 23.27–24.1, 55.9–13, 135.21–25, 193.12–16, 289.20–24, 314.4–8, 348.3, 465.7–9, etc., *bhikṣava ekāntakṛṣṇānām ekāntakṛṣṇo vipākaḥ ekāntaśuklānāṃ dharmāṇām ekāntaśuklo vipākaḥ vyatimiśrāṇāṃ vyatimiśraḥ | tasmāt tarhi bhikṣava ekāntakṛṣṇāni karmāṇy apāsya vyatimiśrāṇi caikāntaśukleṣv eva karmasv ābhogaḥ karaṇīyaḥ | ity evaṃ vo bhikṣavaḥ śikṣitavyam*.

23. The etymology of *śraddhā* is by no means clear. In a chapter entitled "Créance et croyance" in his *Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes*, Émile Benveniste (1993: 177) argues against the more conventional analysis of *śrad* as "heart," since its cognate √*kred* "ne coïncide pas avec le nom du coeur en indo-iranien: c'est un fait étrange, mais indiscutable." Instead, "on ne peut donc que proposer une conjecture: √*kred* serait une sorte de 'gage,' 'd'enjeu'; quelque chose de matériel, mais qui engage aussi le sentiment

personnel, une notion investie d'une force magique appartenant à tout homme et qu'on place ne un être supérieur" (1993: 179). More commonly, however, it is said to be a compound of "heart" (*śrat*) and "to place" (√*dhā*); hence, "to put one's heart [on something]" (e.g., Ernout 1991; Köhler 1973: 1–2). In Yākṣa's *Nirukta*, by contrast, *śrat* is glossed as "a synonym for truth" (*satyanāmāni* | Nir iii.13)—as it frequently is in Vedic materials (Das Gutpa 1930: 318–319)—and *śraddhā* is understood as "an attitude of mind based on truth" (*śraddhānāt* | Nir ix.30). In his commentary on the *Nirukta*, Durgācārya explains that "*śraddhā* is that which conveys truth" (*tat satyam asyāṃ dhīyata iti śraddhā* | Nir 936).

24. For more on *śraddhā* in Vedic literature, see Bloomfield 1908: 186–193; Köhler 1973; Oldenberg 1896: 448–450; Pendse 1978; and Rao 1974.

25. For more on *śraddhā* in Hinduism, see Hacker 1963; Hara 1964 and 1979; and Smith 1979: 59–68.

26. This is a modified version of Rupert Gethin's translation (1992a: 115). Vism xiv, 140, *saddahanti etāya sayaṃ vā saddahati saddahanamattaṃ eva vā esā ti saddhā* | *sā saddahanalakkhaṇā okappanalakkhaṇā vā, pasādanarasā udakappasādakamaṇi viya pakkhandanarasā vā oghuttaraṇaṃ viya* | *akālussiyapaccupaṭṭhānā adhimuttipaccupaṭṭhāna va* | *saddheyyavatthupadaṭṭhānā saddhammasavaṇādisotāpattiaṅgapadaṭṭhānā vā* | *hatthavittabījāni viya daṭṭhabbam*.

27. See Barua 1931; Carter 1978: 99–114 and 1993: 105–114; Conze 1962: 47–50; Dayal 1932: 145–147; Dhammapala 1984: 77–81; Dutt 1940; Ergardt 1977: 140–146; Gethin 1992a: 106–116; Gokhale 1994: 69–83; Guenther 1976: 61–64; Hibbets 2000; Jayatilleke 1963: 382–400; La Vallée Poussin 1908; Ludowyk-Gyomroi 1947; Ñāṇamoli 1963; Payutto 1995: 200–223; Pendse 1978; Saddhatissa 1978; and Saibaba 2005.

28. The Theravādin monk and scholar Phra Prayudh Payutto agrees. He maintains that *saddhā*—which he translates as "confidence"—"must constitute belief based on reason, experience, and experimentation" (1995: 279n3).

29. In slight contrast, Jan Ergardt (1977: 145) writes that "faith in these texts [i.e., the suttas of the *Majjhima-nikāya*] is mainly an affective and conative faculty that functions in the disciple's good decision on the way to the goal. Its cognitive aspect is secondary and derived from the dhamma, of which the utmost knowledge is the knowledge and experience of release and nibbāna."

30. SN iv, 298–299; trans. in Bodhi 2000: 1327–1328.

31. Such a distinction between *saddhā* and *ñāna* (Skt., *jñāna*) is also elaborated elsewhere in the Pali materials. In verse 97 of the *Dhammapada*, there is a seemingly paradoxical ascription that the man "without *saddhā*" (*asaddho*)[a] is, among other things, "the greatest of men" (*uttamaporiso*).[b] In the commentarial story to this verse (Dhp-a ii, 186–188; trans. in Burlingame 1969: ii, 208–209), it is said that on one occasion, in order to shock and, in turn, spiritually benefit thirty forest monks, the monk Sāriputta testifies that he doesn't "act out of *saddhā* in the Blessed One" (*bhagavato saddhāya gacchāmi*) that the faculty of *saddhā* and the four other faculties,[c] when cultivated and enlarged, are connected and terminate with the deathless state that is nibbāna (Skt., *nirvāṇa*). Sāriputta explains that "those who haven't known, seen, understood, directly experienced, or grasped [the deathless] must act out of *saddhā* in others in such matters" (*aññātam assa adiṭṭham*

aviditam asacchikatam aphassitaṃ paññāya, te tattha paresaṃ saddhāya gaccheyyum). The visiting monks think that Sāriputta is wrong in his views, for "even now he doesn't act have *saddhā* in the perfectly awakened Buddha" (*ajjāpi sammāsambuddhassa na saddhati yevā ti*). The Buddha explains, however, that "he doesn't have *saddhā* in such things as the results and consequences of charity or deeds, or in the virtues of the Buddha and so on. He doesn't act out of *saddhā* in others with respect to the states of mind that are connected with the path and its fruits and which are attained by knowledge and insight, for he himself has obtained these" (*na dinnassa vā katassa vā phalavipākaṃ na <saddhahati>*[d] *nāpi buddhādīnaṃ guṇaṃ na <saddhahati>*[d] *ti, eso pana attanā paṭiladdhesu jhānavipassanā-maggaphaladhammesu paresaṃ saddhāya na gacchati*).

Similarly, in the *Indriyasaṃyutta* of the *Saṇyutta-nikāya* (SN v, 220–222; trans. in Bodhi 2000: 1689–1690), in response to a query from the Buddha, Sāriputta explains that he doesn't have *saddhā* in the Buddha that the faculties of *saddhā* and so on, when practiced, lead to nibbāna, since he has realized this for himself and is without doubt in the matter.

[a]For more on this term, see Carter 1993: 108–112.

[b]For detailed exegeses of this verse, see Norman 1980: 325–331 and Hara 1992: 179–181.

[c]The five faculties referred to here are the *saddhā*-faculty (*saddhindriya*), the strength-faculty (*viriyindriya*), the mindfulness-faculty (*satindriya*), the concentration-faculty (*samādhindriya*), and the wisdom-faculty (*paññindriya*). For more on the faculties, see Gethin 1992a: 104–145.

[d]Following the Nalanda Edition (ii, 300) and the Igatpuri Edition (ii, 352). Dhp-a ii, 187, *saddhasi*.

32. For example, one frequently repeated trope runs as follows: "Having heard the dhamma, he acquired *saddhā* in the Tathāgata" (*taṃ dhammaṃ sutvā tathāgate saddhaṃ paṭilabhati* | MN i, 179; i, 267; i, 344; iii, 33). Cf. Hoffman 1987: 400 and Jayatilleke 1963: 389. Perhaps this is why *śraddhā* is translated into classical Chinese as *hsin* ("faith") or *wen-hsin* ("faith by listening") (Park 1983: 15).

33. In contrast, as Steven Collins (1992: 130) remarks, "[Pali] Buddhist texts were more often experienced through the voice and ears than the hands and eyes." I will discuss the contrast between seeing and hearing in greater depth in the chapters that follow.

34. Divy 10.3–8, *āryaś ca mahākātyāyano mamānukampayā āgatya kathayati bhadramukha aniṣṭo 'sya karmaṇaḥ phalavipākaṃ | virama tvam asmāt pāpakād asaddharmāt | nāhaṃ tasya vacanena viramāmi | bhūyo bhūyaḥ sa māṃ vicchandayati bhadramukhāniṣṭo 'sya karmaṇo phalavipākaḥ | virama tvam asmāt pāpakād asaddharmāt | tathāpy ahaṃ na prativiramāmi.*

35. Divy 15.23–24, *sa kathayati aniṣṭo 'sya karmaṇaḥ phalavipāko viramāsmād asaddharmāt.*

36. Divy 15.24–16.5, *bhoḥ puruṣa adya mama pitur dvādaśa varṣāṇi kālagatasya | asti kaścid dṛṣṭaḥ paralokāt punar āgacchan | bhadramukha eṣo 'ham āgataḥ | nāsau śraddadhāti | bhadramukha yadi na śraddadhāsi tava pitā kathayati | asisūnādhastāt suvarṇasya kalaśaḥ pūrṇas tiṣṭhati | tam uddhṛtyātmānaṃ samyaksukhena prīṇaya āryaṃ ca mahākātyāyanaṃ kālena kālaṃ piṇḍakena pratipādayāsmākaṃ ca nāmnā dakṣiṇām ādeśayāpy evaitat karma*

tanutvaṃ parikṣayam paryādānaṃ gacchet | sa saṃlakṣayati | na kadācid evam mayā śrutapūrvaṃ | paśyāmi saced bhūtaṃ bhaviṣyati sarvam etat satyam | tena gatvā khanitaṃ yāvat tat sarvaṃ tat tathaiva tenābhiśraddadhātam. Cf. Divy 16.8–19 and 16.22–17.4.

37. Though the *Divyāvadāna* refers only to five realms of existence, other texts include "antigods" (*asura*) as a sixth. For more on the wheel of existence, see Stephen Teiser's (2006) comprehensive work on the topic and Geshe Tharchin's (1984: 90–113) commentary on the *Rudrāyaṇa-avadāna.*

38. Divy 299.5–12, *tāni dṛṣṭvā jambudvīpam āgatya catasṛṇāṃ parṣadām ārocayati | yasya kasyacit sārdhaṃvihāry antevāsī vā anabhirato brahmacaryaṃ carati sa tam ādāya yenāyuṣmān mahāmaudgalyāyanas tenopasaṃkrāmaty . . . tam āyuṣmān mahāmaudgalyāyanaḥ samyag avavadati samyag anuśāsti | evam aparam aparaṃ te āyuṣmatā mahāmaudgalyāyanena samyag avavāditāḥ samyag anuśiṣṭā abhiratā brahmacaryaṃ caranty uttare ca viśeṣam adhigacchanti.*

39. Divy 300.6–8, *na sarvatrānanda maudgalyāyano bhikṣur bhaviṣyati maudgalyāyanasadṛśo vā | tasmād dvārakoṣṭake pañcagaṇḍakaṃ cakraṃ kārayitavyam.*

40. Divy 71.1–2, *kas te śraddhāsyati iyatpramāṇasya vījasyāyaṃ mahāvṛkṣo nirvṛtta iti.*

41. Divy 71.2–3, *śraddadhātu me bhavān gautamo mā vā <mam>[a]aitat pratyakṣam.*

[a]Following the Tibetan (Shackleton Bailey 1950: 85), read *bdag gi*. Divy 71.3, *naitat.*

42. Divy 71.8–13,

yathā kṣetre ca <bīje ca>[a] pratyakṣas tvam iha dvija |
evaṃ karmavipākeṣu pratyakṣā hi tathāgatāḥ ||
yathā tvayā brāhmaṇa dṛṣṭam etad alpaṃ ca vījaṃ sumahāṃś ca vṛkṣaḥ |
evaṃ mayā brāhmaṇa dṛṣṭam etad alpaṃ ca vījaṃ mahatī ca saṃpad iti ||

[a]Following the Tibetan (Shackleton Bailey 1950: 85) and Cowell and Neil's conjecture (Divy 71n5). Divy 71.8, *bījena.*

A similar example involving a banyan tree is also found in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad:*

> "Fetch a fruit from this banyan tree."
> "Here it is, sir."
> "Break it open."
> "It's broken, sir."
> "What do you see in it?"
> "Sir, there are grains like tiny particles."
> "Well, break open one of them."
> "It's broken, sir."
> "What do you see in it?"
> "Nothing at all, sir."
> Then he said to him, "Dear boy, this subtle essence that you don't perceive—indeed, it is from this subtle essence, son, that this giant banyan tree arises. Have *śraddhā,* my son. That which is this subtle essence constitutes the self of this whole world. That is the truth. That is the self. And that's how you are, Śvetaketu. . . . "

nyagrodhaphalam atah. a¯haretı¯dam. bhagava iti bhinddhı¯ti bhinnam. bhagava iti kim atra pas´yası¯ty an.vya ivema¯ dha¯na¯ bhagava ity a¯sa¯m an.gaika¯m. bhinddhı¯ti bhinna¯ bhagava iti kim atra pas´yası¯ti na kim. cana bhagava ti | tam. hova¯ca yam. vai saumyaitam an.ima¯nam. na nibha¯layasa etasya vai somyais.o 'n.imna evam. maha¯nyagrodhas tis. t.hati s´raddhatsva somyeti | sa ya es.o 'n.imaitad a¯tmyam idam. sarvam. tat satyam. sa a¯tma¯ tat tvam asi s´vetaketo iti | Ch-Up 479–481/vi.12.1–3; cf. trans. in Olivelle 1998: 255.

Here *śraddhā* seems to have an even more affective and pious sense than it does in the *Divyāvadāna*. While in the verse from the *Brāhmaṇadārikā-avadāna*, the Buddha asks the brahman to have *śraddhā* in him because he can see the effects of karma directly, in this verse, the boy Śvetaketu is asked to have *śraddhā* in precisely what cannot be seen—for he sees "nothing at all." As we read in Śaṇkarācārya's commentary, this elusive *śraddhā* somehow enables concentration and, in turn, knowledge:

> Therefore, "have *śraddhā*, friend" (*śraddhatsva somya*) that this gross universe, which is a product and is possessed of name and form, has arisen from existence itself, which is subtle. Although the meaning ascertained through logic and scriptures is understood to be just so; nonetheless, in the absence of intense *śraddhā* it is very difficult for one whose mind is engrossed in external objects and who is impelled by his own nature to comprehend very subtle objects. Hence he said, "have *śraddhā*" (*śraddhatsva*). For when *śraddhā* is present, there can be concentration of the mind on the thing that is to be understood, and in consequence there can be the understanding of its meaning. This is supported by such *śruti* texts as "I was absent-minded" (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaṇisad* i.5.3).
>
> *ataḥ śraddhatsva somya sata evāṇimnaḥ sthūlaṃ nāmarūpādimatkāryaṃ jagad utpannam iti | yadyapi nyāyāgamābhyāṃ nirdhārito 'rthas tathaivety avagamyate tathāpyatyanasūkṣmeṣv artheṣu bāhyaviṣayāsaktamanasaḥ svabhāvapravṛttasyāsatyāṃ gurutarāyāṃ śraddhāyāṃ duravagamatvaṃ syād ity āha—śraddhatsveti | śraddhāyāṃ tu satyāṃ manasaṃ samādhānaṃ bubhutsite 'rthe bhavet tataś ca tadarthāvagatiḥ anyatramanā abhūvam (Bṛ Up i.5.3) ityādiśruteḥ* | Ch-Up-bh 656.

43. The divine eye (*divyacakṣu*) enables one to see the passing away of beings in this world and their reappearance in the next world. In the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* (DN i, 82), it is observed that "with a divine eye, which is purified and surpasses those of mortals, [an arhat monk] sees beings passing away and being reborn, those who are inferior and superior, fair and ugly, and happy or unhappy in their destiny; he understands beings as faring according to their kamma" (*so dibbena cakkhunā visuddhena atikkantamānusakena satte passati cavamāne upapajjamāne hīne paṇīte suvaṇṇe dubbaṇṇe sugate duggate yathākammūpage satte pajānāti*). This passage is then discussed in the *Kathāvatthu* (Kv 256–258; trans. in Aung and Rhys Davids 1979: 151–152). There a distinction is made between those beings who have had insight into the karmic truth that one's actions determine one's destiny (e.g., Sāriputta) and those who have come to

know this truth by making use of the divine eye (e.g., the Buddha). Koṭikarṇa, however, seems to have come to this knowledge through observations made with his mundane vision. This passage is also well glossed in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vism xiii.72–78; trans. in Ñāṇamoli 1979: 464–466).

44. Divy 268.13, *avagāḍhaśrāddhaḥ*.

45. Divy 268.21–24,

> *sacandratāraṃ prapated ihāmbaraṃ mahī saśailā savanā nabho vrajet |*
> *mahodadhīnām udakaṃ kṣayaṃ vrajed maharṣayaḥ syur namṛṣābhi-*
> *dhāyinaḥ ||*

46. Seeing into the future, however, does not necessitate that one will speak the truth. In the *Jyotiṣka-avadāna*, a mendicant named Bhūrika (Clever) overhears a prediction that the Blessed One has made to the householder Subhadra (Very Good Man). He has predicted that the child with whom his wife is pregnant will experience good fortune. To win favor with the householder and alienate him from the Blessed One, Bhūrika then tells the householder that the Blessed One has spoken falsely to him and that his child will bring ruin to his family. Bhūrika does this even though "he sees that everything will happen just as the Blessed One has predicted" (*paśyati yathā bhagavatā vyākṛtaṃ tat sarvaṃ tathaiva* | Divy 263.10). The householder Subhadra comes under Bhūrika's influence and as a result tries to kill his unborn child. He succeeds, however, only in killing his wife.

47. Divy 71.14–18, *tato bhagavatā mukhāj jihvāṃ nirnamayya sarvaṃ mukhamaṇḍalam ācchāditaṃ yāvat keśaparyantam upādāya sa ca brāhmaṇo 'bhihitaḥ | kiṃ manyase brāhmaṇa yasya mukhāj jihvāṃ niścārya sarvaṃ mukhamaṇḍalam ācchādayaty api tv asau cakravartirājyaśatasahasrahetor api saṃprajānan mṛṣāvādaṃ bhāṣeta*.

48. Divy 17.4–6, *sarvo 'yaṃ lokaḥ suvarṇasya śraddadhāti na tu kaścin mama śraddhayā gacchati*.

49. Divy 17.6, *tena vaipuṣpitam*. The *Gilgit Manuscripts* (GM iii 4, 182) reads [*vaipu*]*ṣpitam*. The Tibetan (N 262b7; cited in GM iii 4, 182n2) reads "smiled" (*'dzum phyung ba* —> Skt., <*smitam*>).

50. Divy 6.7, *yadi vayaṃ nivartiṣyāmaḥ sarva evānayena vyasanam āpatsyāmaḥ*.

51. Divy 6.21, *tau na kasyacit punar api śradaddhātum ārabdhau*. Koṭikarṇa's father was, no doubt, particularly upset that Koṭikarna's half-brothers, who were born to one of his servants, didn't live up to their names—"Servant" and "Protector." They also didn't heed his earlier request: "Sons, don't leave Śroṇa Koṭikarṇa behind under any circumstances" (*putrau yuvābhyāṃ na kenacit prakāreṇa śroṇaḥ koṭikarṇo moktavya iti* | Divy 4.23–24)!

52. Divy 6.26, *tau śokena rudantāv andhībhūtau*.

53. Divy 17.10, *te na kasyacit śraddhayā gacchanti*.

54. Divy 17.17–18, *putrāvāṃ tvadīyena śokena rudantāv andhībhūtau | idānīṃ tvam evāgamya cakṣuḥ pratilabdham*.

55. Divy 338.18–20, *kiṃ yuṣmākaṃ pratiśrayaṃ na dīyate | api tu yuṣmākaṃ doṣo 'sti bahubollakā yūyam | samayenāhaṃ bhavataḥ pratiśrayaṃ dāsye sacet kiṃcin na mantrayasi*. Burnouf (1844: 323) renders the first sentence of this passage differently. He understands the virtuous seer to be addressing his cohorts: "Pourquoi, dit-il aux Religieux, ne donnez-vous pas l'hospitalité [à cet Ārya]?"

56. The narrator explains that the venerable Saṅgharakṣita "began to recite [from the] Chapter on Brahmans" (*brāhmaṇavargaṃ svādhyāyitum ārabdhaḥ* | Divy 339.22). What he recites, however, with minor variations, are two verses from the "Chapter on Punishment" (*daṇḍavagga*) in the *Dhammapada* (Dhp, vv. 141–142). Cf. *Dharmapada* (Dhp-BHS, vv. 195–196).

57. Divy 340.8–12, *asmin khalu dharmaparyāye bhāṣyamāṇe sarvais tais sahasatyābhisamayād anāgāmiphalam anuprāptam ṛddhiś cāpi nirhṛtā sarvais taiḥ subhāṣitaṃ bhadantasaṃgharakṣitāyety ekanādo muktaḥ | tayā devatayā ṛddhyabhisaṃskārāḥ pratiprasrabdhāḥ parasparaṃ draṣṭum ārabdhāḥ*.

Although in this case the seers "obtained" (*anuprāptam*) their religious rewards, this trope, which is very common in the *Divyāvadāna*, usually relies on ocular imagery. A character "see what's before his eyes" (*pratyakṣadarśī*) and comes to have *śraddhā*, and then later "directly experiences" (*sākṣātkaroti*) the rewards of the stages of the Buddhist path. Koṭikarṇa, for example, after hearing the dharma from the venerable Mahākātyāyana, "directly experienced the reward of the stream-enterer" (*śrotāpattiphalaṃ sākṣātkṛtam* | Divy 17.21); after studying the four fundamental collections of discourses (*āgama*), "directly experienced the reward of the once-returner" (*sakṛdāgāmiphalaṃ sākṣ ātkṛtam* | Divy 17.23); after studying the *mātṛkā*s (see Gethin 1992b), "directly experienced the reward of the nonreturner" (*anāgāmiphalaṃ sākṣātkṛtam* | Divy 18.6); and after getting rid of all his defilements, "directly experienced arhatship" (*arhattvaṃ sākṣātkṛ tam* | Divy 18.25–26). More literally, these respective rewards were seen "with" (*sa*) "the eyes" (*akṣa*) or were "clearly placed before the eyes" (MW, s.v. *sākṛāt* + √*kṛ*). This latter rendering is a nearly literal translation of *pratyakṣadarśī:* that is, "being a seer" (*darśī*) of something that is "before" (*prati*) "the eyes" (*akṣa*). In both instances, to know something truly means to somehow grasp it through the eyes.

CHAPTER 2

1. See, for example, Cort 2002; Cutler 1987; and Haberman 1988.

2. For more on *bhakti* in Sanskrit literature, see Bailey 1988; Das Gupta 1930: 322–333; Hara 1964: 125–132; and Rao 1974.

3. Divy 1.7–17, *śivavaruṇakuveraśakrabrahmādīn āyācate | ārāmadevatāṃ vanadevatāṃ śṛṅgāṭakadevatāṃ balipratigrāhikāṃ devatāṃ sahajāṃ sahadharmikāṃ nityānubaddhām api devatām āyācate | asti caiṣa lokapravādo yad āyācanahetoḥ putrā jāyante duhitaraś ceti | tac ca naivam | yady evam abhaviṣyad ekaiakasya putrasahasram abhaviṣyat tad yathā rājñaś cakravartinaḥ api tu trayāṇāṃ sthānānāṃ saṃmukhībhāvāt putrā jāyante duhitaraś ca | katameṣāṃ trayāṇām | mātāpitarau raktau bhavataḥ saṃnipatitau | mātā kalyā bhavati ṛtumatī | gandharvapratyupasthitā bhavati | eṣāṃ trayāṃmāṃ sthānānāṃ saṃmukhībhāvāt putrā jāyante duhitaraś ca | sa caivam āyācanaparas tiṣṭhati*.

4. Divy 231.23–232.3, *sarveṣām evāsmākaṃ maraṇaṃ pratyupasthitam | tad idānīṃ bhavadbhiḥ kiṃ karaṇīyam | yasya vo yasmin deve bhaktiḥ sa tam āyācatu | yadi tenāpi tāvad āyācanena kācid devatāsmākam asmān mahābhayād vimokṣaṇaṃ kuryāt | na cānyo 'sti kaścid upāyo jīvitasya | yatas tair baṇigbhir maraṇabhayabhītaiḥ śivavaruṇakuveramahendropendrādayo devā jīvitaparitrāṇārtham āyācitum ārabdhāḥ | naiva ca teṣām āyācatāṃ tasmān maraṇabhayāj jīvitaparitrāṇaviśeṣaḥ kaścit*.

5. Here the recitation of this mantra is explicitly included under the practice of *buddhānusmṛti* ("bringing to mind the Buddha"). As the lay disciple of the Buddha explains, "Still, let us all raise our voices together and say, 'Praise to the Buddha!' If we have to die, let us die with our awareness focused on the Buddha. This way there will be a good fate for us after death" (*kiṃtu sarva evaikaraveṇa namo buddhāyeti vadāmaḥ | sati maraṇe buddhāvalambanayā smṛtyā kālaṃ kariṣyāmaḥ sugatigamanaṃ bhaviṣyati* | Divy 232.6–8).

6. Divy 42.1–4, *bhavantaḥ sa evāryapūrṇaḥ puṇyamaheśākhyaḥ | tam eva śaraṇaṃ prapadyāma iti | tair ekasvareṇa sarvair evaṃ nādo muktaḥ | namas tasmād āryāya pūrṇāya namo namas tasmāy āryāya pūrṇāyeti*.

7. The apotropaic effects of such a practice are also described in chapter 24 of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*, an Indian Buddhist text commonly known as the *Lotus Sūtra*, which dates back to the first or second century of the Common Era. In it, the numerous benefits of "bringing to mind the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara" or reciting a salutation to him are enumerated—among them, interestingly enough, being saved from shipwrecks. Judging from the beneficiaries of this practice that are acknowledged in the text, overseas merchants were prime among the intended user-groups. As it is explained in the text, "If, good man, hundreds and thousands and millions and billions of beings are on board a boat in the middle of the ocean in search of treasures like raw and processed gold, jewels, pearls, diamonds, beryl, conch, quartz, coral, emeralds, sapphires, rubies, and pearls, even if their boat is cast onto Demoness Island by gale-force winds, if there is even one being among them who calls on Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva, the great being, all of them will be freed from that Demoness Island" (*sacet punaḥ kulaputra sāgaramadhye vahanābhirūḍhānāṃ sattvakoṭīn[i]yutaśatasahasrāṇāṃ hiraṇyasuvarṇamaṇimuktāvajravaiḍūryaśaṅkhaśilāpravāḍāśmagarbhamusāragalvalohitamuktādīnāṃ kṛtanidhīnāṃ sa potas teṣāṃ kālikāvātena rākṣasīdvīpe kṣiptaḥ syāt tasmiṇs ca kaścid evaikaḥ sattvaḥ syād yo 'valokiteśvarasya bodhisattvasya mahāsattvasyākrandaṃ kuryāt sarve te parimucyeraṃs tasmād rākṣasīdvīpāt* | Saddhp 289). Apropos of this idea, in the passage that follows this one in the text, it is said that a caravan rich in jewels can be saved from bandits if its members call out in one voice to Avalokiteśvara (Saddhp 290). For an English translation of the parallel passages from the Chinese version of the text, see Hurvitz 1976: 311–312. For more on *buddhānusmṛti*, see Harrison 1978 and 1992a.

8. Though deities are not shown in the *Divyāvadāna* to respond to prayer, elsewhere in the text they do intervene in mundane affairs—in precisely such matters as pregnancy. In the *Maitreya-avadāna*, a king named Praṇāda is lost in thought because, like the householder Balasena in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, he doesn't have a son but desires one. Śakra, lord of the gods, and also a close friend of King Praṇāda, sees the king and asks him about his condition. When he hears of the king's desire for a son, he decides to urge a divine being (*devaputra*) to take birth in the womb of King Praṇāda's principal queen. He does so, and soon the king's principal queen is pregnant with a fallen god in her womb. Śakra, it seems, can intercede in matters such as pregnancy, but he apparently doesn't do so as a result of being prayed to.

9. Divy 109.29–110.1, *upasthānakarmāṇi satputra iva pitaraṃ bhaktyā gauraveṇa śuśrūṣate*.

10. Divy 109.16–18, *mā haiva magho mahāsārthavāho 'dṛṣṭa eva kālaṃ kuryāt ko me vyapadeśaṃ kariṣyati tasya badaradvīpamahāpattanasya gamanāyeti*.

11. See *Abhidharmakośa* ii.32 (Abhidh-k 203) and the commentary in Yaśomitra's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. This warning occurs most explicitly in Yaśomitra's commentary on the aphorism "affection (*prema*) is *śraddhā*."

12. See the *Vakkali-sutta* in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (SN iii, 119–124; trans. in Bodhi 2000: 938–941); the *Paramatthadīpanī V* [= *Theragāthā* Commentary] on verses 350–354 (Th-a i, 147–150; trans. in Rhys Davids ii, 197–200); the Vakkali story in the Etadagga Vagga of the *Manorathapūraṇī* [= *Aṅguttara-nikāya* Commentary] (Mp i, 248–251); the *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā* on verse 381 (Dhp-a iv, 117–119; trans. in Burlingame 1969: iii, 262–263); and *Apadāna* (Ap ii, 466). For more on the connection between seeing and *saddhā* in the stories of Vakkali, see Trainor 1997: 181–183.

13. Th-a i, 147, Dhp-a iv, 119, Mp i, 249, *saddhādhimuttānam aggaṭṭhāne*.

14. Dhp-a iv, 118, *sarīrasampattidassanena atitto*.

15. Dhp-a iv, 118, *tattha ṭhito sajjhāyakammaṭṭhānamanasikārādīni pahāya satthāram olokento va vicari*.

16. Th-a i, 147, *kiṃ te, vakkali, iminā pūtikāyena diṭṭhena*.

17. Th-a i, 148, *tassa saddhābalavabhāvato eva vipassanāvīthiṃ na otarati*.

18. Vakkali does kill himself in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (SN iii, 123).

19. For more on this connection, see Bloomfield 1908: 190–193; Das Gupta 1930: 320–321; and Rao 1974: 45–47.

20. Divy 10.25, *samyaksukhena prīṇaya*. The idea here is also that he should enjoy himself "in the right way" (*samyak*) according to Buddhist notions of propriety. For the passages concerning the adulterer and the prostitute, see Divy 12.11–12 and 14.27–28.

21. Divy 10.26–28, *āryaṃ ca mahākātyāyanaṃ kālena kālaṃ piṇḍakena pratipādayāsmākaṃ ca nāmnā dakṣiṇām ādeśaya | apy evaitat karma tanutvaṃ parikṣayaṃ paryādānaṃ gacchet*. Cf. Divy 12.12–14, 14.28–15.1.

22. For more on this "transfer of merit," see Schopen 1997: 43; 55n104; 78; 79; 213; 229nn42–43; and 231n61. See also Bechert 1992; Egge 2002; Filliozat 1980: 102–116; Gombrich 1971: 203–219; Oguibenine 1982: 393–414; and for a list of sources on the topic, Wezler 1997: 585–589.

23. Divy 2.13–14, *jāto me syān navajātaḥ | kṛtyāni me kurvīta bhṛtaḥ pratibibhṛyād dāyādyaṃ pratipadyeta kulavaṃśo me cirasthitiko bhaviṣyati*.

24. Divy 2.15–17, *asmākaṃ cātyatītakālagatānām alpaṃ vā prabhūtaḥ vā dānāni dattvā puṇyāni kṛtvā* [*asmākaṃ nāmnā*][a] *dakṣiṇām ādeśayiṣyati | idaṃ tayor yatra yatropapannayor gacchator anugacchatv iti*.

[a]Following GM iii 4, 160.17–161.1 and Divy 440.30. Divy 2.16, (omitted). Claus Vogel and Klaus Wille (1984: 311) translate a parallel passage from the Tibetan version of the Pravrajyāvastu in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* as follows: "Having made us (funeral) presents—whether they are few or many—after we shall have died and met our death, (and thus) having done good works, may he allocate the (profit of his every) gift in (our) name, (saying): 'This shall follow the two (parents) to where they go after rebirth.' "

25. Presumably what is meant is after the two of them have passed away, but the text preserves the genitive plural (*asmākam*) and not the genitive dual (*āvayoḥ*).

26. This compound could also be taken as "in the temples belonging to their assembly halls," or more loosely as "in the temples that were used by their respective assemblies." Perhaps *svakasabhā* even means something like "town halls" here. Later in the story these offerings are only mentioned as being seen "in the park that was owned by Koṭikarṇa's father in the village of Vāsava" (*vāsavagrāmake paitṛke udyāne* | Divy 15.6–7).

27. Divy 6.21–26, *tābhyām udyāneṣu svakasabhādevakuleṣu chatrāṇi vyajanāni kalaśāny upānahāni cākṣarāṇy abhilikhitāni dattāni sthāpitāni yadi tāvac śroṇaḥ koṭikarṇo jīvati laghv āgamanāya kṣipram āgamanāya | atha cyutaḥ kālagataḥ tasyaiva gatyupapattisthānāt sthānāntaraviśeṣatāyai.*

28. Divy 8.5–6, *śroṇa gaccha puṇyamaheśākhyas tvam | asti kaścit tvayā dṛṣṭaḥ pretanagaraṃ praviṣṭaḥ svastikṣemābhyāṃ nirgacchan.*

29. In the *Divyāvadāna*, an interlocutor's silence frequently signifies his assent, but as Gregory Schopen (1995: 114–115) notes, in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* this silence often expresses consternation and a lack of clarity. In this instance the meaning of the gatekeeper's silence isn't clear.

30. Divy 8.8–11, *bhadramukha* [*yadi*][a] *ahovata tvayā mamārocitaṃ syād yathedaṃ pretanagaram iti nāham atra praviṣṭaḥ syām | sa tenoktaḥ | śroṇa gaccha puṇyamaheśākhyas tvaṃ yena tvaṃ pretanagaraṃ praviśya svastikṣemābhyāṃ nirgataḥ.*

[a]Following Divy 9.8. It is omitted here (Divy 8.8) and in the corresponding passage in the *Gilgit Manuscripts* (GM iii 4, 169.11).

31. It isn't only inhabitants of the next world but also those of this world who recognize how difficult it is for ordinary mortals to traipse through other realms of existence. As the shepherd observes, when Koṭikarṇa tells him that he has seen his father, "Sir, it's now been twelve years since my father died. Has anyone ever been seen coming back from the next world?" The adulterer and the prostitute, in turn, are similarly incredulous.

32. Edgerton translates *maheśākhya* as "one who is a great personage by reason of merit (acquired by past deeds)," but he acknowledges that there are interpretive difficulties (BHSD, s.v. *maheśākhya*). Following classical Sanskrit, one may be tempted to translate the expression literally as "one who is called" (*ākhya*) "the great" (*mahā*) "lord" (*īśa*) "of merit" (*puṇya*) or "one who is greatly distinguished by merit," but the existence of certain variant forms like *mahāśakya*—"very" (*mahā*) "powerful" (*śakya*)—and *mahāyaśākhya*—"having a very glorious" (*mahāyaśa*) "name" (*ākhya*)—might give, as Edgerton notes, "a clue to the real etymology of *maheśākhya*." The latter form, he maintains, "fits the word at least as well, and is in my opinion at as plausible etymologically as the traditional (but rather mechanical) analysis *mahā* plus *īśa* plus *ākhya*" (BHSD, s.v. *mahāyaśākhya*).

It is also quite possible that *maheśākhya* is a hyper-Sanskritization of the Pali, *mahesakkha*, but this, in turn, is equally ambiguous. Rhys Davids and Stede (PTSD, s.v, *mahesakkha*) understand this as "possessing great power or authority" (*mahā* + *īsa* + *khyaṃ*), though *mahe* + *sakkha* is also a possible etymology for this meaning. The *Critical Pali Dictionary* (s.v. *appesakkha*) poses an alternate derivation, suggesting "one who possesses" (*ka*) "great" (*mahā*) "fame" (*yaśas*)—that is, "well respected" or "well esteemed."

33. For example, in the *Supriya-avadāna*, there is a caravan leader named Supriya who travels for a full one hundred years through remote and dangerous lands

so that he can reach the great trading center Badaradvīpa. The being who had passed away and then was reborn as Supriya, and then Supriya himself are each referred to as "*maheśākhya* because of [his] vast merit" (*udārapuṇdamaheśākhya* | Divy 98.20, 102.6), leading the reader to conclude, with no indication to the contrary, that this quality is in some sense inheritable. While "fame" or "esteem" are possible interpretations, "very powerful" seems more likely.

Deities, humans, and nonhumans are also referred to as *maheśākhya* in passages that stress the power of those individuals. A deity appears to Supriya four times in his dreams and gives him instructions for his journey such as the following:

> A person who is *very powerful* and is protected by a deity who is *very powerful* can make use of [his] great powers of merit, strength, and mind, take a great raft, and set sail in the great Anulomapratiloma Ocean . . . A person who is *very powerful* as a result of [his] vast merit and who is protected by a deity can make use of [his] great powers of merit, strength, mind, and body, take a great raft, and set sail in the great Āvarta Ocean. [emphasis added]
>
> *tatra yo 'sau puruṣo bhavati maheśākhyo maheśākhyadevatāparigṛhītaḥ sa mahatā puṇyabalena vīryabalena cittabalena mahāntaṃ plavam āsthāya anulomapratilomamahāsamudram avatarati . . . tatra yo 'sau puruṣo bhavaty udārapuṇyavipākamaheśākhyo devatāparigṛhītaḥ sa mahatā puṇyabalena vīryabalena cittabalena kāyabalena mahāntaṃ plavam āsthādāvartaṃ mahāsamudram avatarati* | Divy 103.5–8 and 103.25–104.1.

In the last of Supriya's dreams, the deity gives him additional instructions, and these provide further evidence, as they stress the physical danger of someone who is *maheśākhya*. The deity explains,

> You have now arrived at the great trading center Badaradvīpa, which neither humans nor nonhumans frequent. It is inhabited by *very powerful* men. Still, don't be careless. Guard your senses, your eyes and so on, and cultivate mindfulness of the body. [emphasis added]
>
> *saṃprāpto 'si badaradvīpamahāpattanaṃ manuṣyāmanuṣyānavacaritaṃ maheśākhyapuruṣādyuṣitam | kiṃtarhi na sāmpratam aprasādaḥ karaṇīyaḥ | indriyāṇi ca gopayitavyāni cakṣurādīni kāyagatā smṛtir bhavitavyā* | Divy 114.18–21.

Additional interpretive examples could be marshaled to substantiate my claim, but instead I'll make just one last etymological observation. Even if it doesn't lend much support to my position, it does further suggest the term's ambiguity. An alternate formation stemming from √*śak* ("to be able") occurs in the *Supriya-avadāna* (Divy 111.10) that bears similarity to *maheśākhya*. There the first-person form of the present-tense √*śak* occurs as *śakyāmi* instead of the normal strong form *śaknomi*. Further speculation I'll leave for others.

34. Divy 23.22–24, *yad anena kāśyapasya samyaksaṃbuddhasya stūpe kārāṃ kṛtvā praṇidhānaṃ kṛtaṃ tasya karmaṇo vipākenāḍhye mahādhane mahābhoge kule jātaḥ*.

35. One possibility that can be granted, though one of which I am not convinced, is that their offerings are a futile exercise that they persist in during the period of their blindness—that is, in the period when they do not have *śraddhā*.

36. In this regard, it is interesting to observe the discrepancy between the *Divyāvadāna* and the *Gilgit Manuscripts* concerning what was uttered by the groups of hungry ghosts in the two iron cities. In the *Divyāvadāna*, the hungry ghosts explain that they have come to the "ancestral realm" (*pitṛloka* | Divy 8.4, 9.4), while in the *Gilgit Manuscripts*, they explain that they have come to "the realm of hungry ghosts" (*preta-loka* | GM iii 4, 169.7, 170.2). That the ancestral realm is mentioned in the *Divyāvadāna* is peculiar, for this isn't one of the standard realms of existence in Buddhist cosmology. Yet, if this were a brahmanical text, it would be expected that a being who had come to the ancestral realm would be an ancestor and not a hungry ghost. The Hindu funereal ritual known as *sapiṇḍīkaraṇa* is performed precisely to enable this transformation; otherwise, the deceased would remain a ghost and not be able to rejoin his ancestors. Particularly interesting with regard to the mechanics of *dakṣiṇā* is P.V. Kane's (1930–1962: ii, 523) observation that the reunion of the deceased and his ancestors occurs not during this ritual, but when the *dakṣiṇā* ("honorarium") is made to the presiding brahman. Also relevant is Jonathan Parry's (1982: 84) observation—for it resonates with the events recorded in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*—that after the performance of this ritual, "the soul then sets out on its journey to 'the abode of the ancestors' ([Hindi,] *pitṛ lok*) where it arrives on the anniversary of its death, having endured many torments on the way—torments which the mourners seek to mitigate by the rituals they perform on its behalf."

37. GM iii 1, 220.1–221.6 and Saṅghabh i, 199.11–30; cited in Schopen 1994a: 545.

38. GM iii 1, 220.20–221.2, *tato bhagavān pañcāṅgena svareṇa teṣāṃ nāmnā dakṣiṇām ādeṣṭuṃ pravṛttaḥ* |

> *ito dānad dhi yat puṇyaṃ tat pretān upagacchatu* |
> *vyuttiṣṭhantāṃ kṣipram ime pretalokāt sudāruṇāt* ||

39. Saṅghabh i, 199.24–26, *bhagavatā ca pañcāṅgopetena svareṇa dakṣiṇā ādiṣṭā* |

> *ito dānad dhi yat puṇyaṃ tac chākyān upagacchatu* |
> *prāpnuvantu padaṃ nityam īpsitān vā manorathān* ||

40. Divy 15.11–12, *yady ahaṃ mātāpitṛbhyāṃ mṛta eva gṛhītaḥ kasmād bhūyo 'haṃ gṛham praviśāmi*. Notice the *eva* for emphasis.

41. Divy 7.6–7, *te tṛṣārtā vihvalavadanā jihvāṃ nirnāmayya gacchanti*.

42. Divy 7.8–11, *tasya kāruṇyam utpannam* | *sa saṃlakṣayati* | *yady etān notsrakṣyāmi anayena vyasanam āpatsye* | *ko 'sau nirghṛṇahṛdayas tyaktaparalokaś ca ya eṣāṃ pratoda-yaṣṭiṃ kāye nipātayiṣyati* | *tena ta utsṛṣṭhāḥ* | *adyāgreṇa acchinnāgrāṇi tṛṇāni bhakṣayata anavamarditāni pānīyāni pivata anāvilāni caturdiśaṃ ca śītalā vāyavo vāntv iti sa tān utsṛjya padbhyāṃ saṃprasthitaḥ*.

43. Divy 7.24–25, *bhavanto 'ham api pānīyam eva mṛgayāmi* | *kuto 'haṃ yuṣmākaṃ pānīyam anuprayacchāmīti*.

44. Divy 12.24–25, *śroṇa kāruṇikas tvaṃ bubhukṣitā vadam asmākam anuprayaccha*.

45. Divy 12.22, *śroṇa yady ete kiṃcin mṛgayanti mā dāsyasi.*

46. Divy 12.29–13.1, *śroṇa nivāritas tvaṃ mayā kasmāt tvayaiṣāṃ dattam | kiṃ mama kāruṇikayā tvam eva kāruṇikataraḥ.*

47. The mechanics of this "assigning the reward" are never mentioned in the *Divyāvadāna*, but one passage from the *Dharmaruci-āvadāna* does offer some insight. A householder has come to the monastery at the Jeta Grove with enough food to feed five hundred monks. Unfortunately, all the monks except Dharmaruci, the temporary supervisor of the monastery, have gone off for a meal at someone's home. The householder is disappointed that he can't feed everyone but decides that he can at least feed Dharmaruci. Dharmaruci, however, has an insatiable appetite, and by and by eats all the food that the man has brought. The man is terrified, thinking "This isn't a man. This isn't any kind of man at all" (*nāyaṃ manuṣyo manuṣyavikāraḥ* | Divy 238.22)! Then, "so seized was he with terror, that without even waiting to hear the assignment of the reward [that was accrued from the offering], he said, 'Noble one, I praise you!' and then set out for the city as fast as he could, never looking back" (*dakṣiṇādeśanam api bhayagṛhīto 'śrutvā tvaritatvaritaṃ vandāmy āryeti pṛṣṭham anavalokayamāno nagaraṃ prasthitaḥ* | Divy 239.2–4).

48. More literally, *preta* means "the departed."

49. Divy 10.27–28, 12.13, 14.29, *asmākaṃ ca nāmnā dakṣiṇām ādeśaya.*

50. The object of the previously mentioned Hindu funereal ritual known as *sapiṇḍīkaraṇa* is to unite the recently deceased with three generations of ancestors in the deceased's lineage. For more on this ritual, see Gold 1988: 90–94 and Knipe 1977.

51. In the passage that I cited earlier in the chapter from the *Saṅghabhedavastu* (Saṅghabh i, 199.24–26), merit is assigned to the Śākyas, the North Indian tribe to which the Buddha belonged.

52. Divy 16–17, *idaṃ tayor yatra yatropapannayor gacchator anugacchatv iti.*

53. Divy 10.27–28, 12.13–14, 14.29–15.1, *apy evaitat karma tanutvaṃ parikṣayaṃ paryādānaṃ gacchet.*

54. As Schopen (1996: 123) remarks elsewhere, "Monasteries—to put it crudely—are not presented here [i.e., in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*] primarily as residences for monks to live in, but rather as potential and permanent sources of merit for their donors."

55. Yet, as Derrida (2000: 188–189) notes, writing about the poems of Paul Celan, "*bearing witness* is not *proving* . . . 'I *bear witness*'—that means: 'I affirm (rightly or wrongly, but in all good faith, sincerely) that that was or is present to me, in space and time (thus, perceptible), and although you do not have access to it, not the same access, you, my adressees, *you have to believe me*, because I am committed to telling you the truth, I am already committed to it, I tell you that I am telling you the truth. Believe me. You have to believe me.' "

56. Divy 7.13–15 (cf. Divy 8.13–15), *tatra dvāre puruṣas tiṣṭhati kālo raudraś caṇḍo lohitākṣa* <*udbaddhapiṇḍo*>[a] *lohalaguḍavyagrahastaḥ.*

[a]Following GM iii 4, 168.6 (ms., *udbandhapiṇḍakāyaṣṭhi*). The *Divyāvadāna* (Divy 7.14) reads "a body full of holes" (*udviddhapiṇḍa*).

57. Divy 300.26–301.4, *brāhmaṇagṛhapataya āgatya pṛcchanti | ārya kim idaṃ likhitam iti | te kathayanti | bhadramukhā vayam api na jānīma iti | bhagavān āha | dvārakoṣṭhake bhikṣur uddeṣṭavyo ya āgatāgatānāṃ brāhmaṇagṛhapatīnāṃ darśayati | uktam bhagavatā*

bhikṣur uddeṣṭavya iti te aviśeṣeṇoddiśanti bālān api mūḍhān apy avyaktān apy akuśalān api | te ātmanā na jānate kutaḥ punar āgatānāṃ brāhmaṇagṛhapatīnāṃ darśayiṣyanti | bhagavān āha | pratibalo bhikṣur uddeṣṭavya iti.

58. For more on the cognitive/affective distinction in Buddhism, see Gellner 2001: 54–56.

59. For more on this Kantian aesthetics within a visual context, see Morgan 1998: 26–29.

60. AN i, 188–193; trans. in Woodward and Hare 1932–1936: i, 170–175 and Bodhi 2005: 88–91. For an insightful anaylsis of the sutta, see Bodhi 1988.

61. AN i, 189, *ko su nāma imesaṃ <bhavataḥ samaṇabrāhmaṇānaṃ>*[a] *saccam āha ko musā ti.*

[a]Following the Igatpuri Edition (i, 217). AN i, 189, *bhavantānaṃ samaṇānaṃ.*

62. AN i, 189, *etha tumhe kālāmā mā anussavena mā paramparāya mā itikirāya mā piṭakasampadānena mā takkahetu mā nayahetu mā ākāraparivitakkena mā diṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā mā bhavdarūpatāya mā samaṇo no garū ti | yadā tumhe kālāmā attanā va jāneyyātha—ime dhammā akusalā ime dhammā sāvajjā ime dhammā viññugarahitā ime dhammā samattā samādinnā ahitāya dukkhāya saṃvattantī ti—atha tumhe kālāmā pajaheyyātha.*

63. For a parallel in the Pali materials, see Payutto 1995: 182–185.

64. Divy 15.11–13, *yady ahaṃ mātāpitṛbhyāṃ mṛta eva gṛhītaḥ kasmād bhūyo 'haṃ gṛhaṃ praviśāmi gacchāmy āryamahākātyāyanasyāntikāt pravrajāmīti.*

65. Divy 17.4–6, *sarvo 'yaṃ lokaḥ suvarṇasya śraddadhāti na tu kaścin mama śraddhayā gacchati.*

66. Considering that this text is little more than an enumeration of proper gifts and their results, its presence in the *Divyāvadāna* further attests to this "gold standard" as system of knowledge that had both cachet and currency.

67. There are seven factors of awakening (Skt., *bodhyaṅga;* Pali, *bojjhaṅga*). These are the awakening-factors of mindfulness (*smṛti*), discrimination of dharma (*dharmapravicaya*), strength (*vīrya*), joy (*prīti*), serenity (*praśrabdi*), concentration (*samādhi*), and equanimity (*upekṣā*). For more, see Gethin 1992a: 146–189.

68. Divy 482.16–20, *vastradānaṃ dadāti praṇītavastrabhogavipākapratilābhasaṃvartanīyam | pratiśrayaṃ dānaṃ dadāti harmyakūṭāgāraprāsādabhavanavimānodyānārāmaviśeṣavipākapratilābhasaṃvartanīyam | śayyādānaṃ dadāti uccakulabhogavipākapratilābhasaṃvartanīyam.*

69. Divy 23.18–20, *anenāhaṃ kuśalamūlenāḍhye mahādhane mahābhoge kule jāyeyam evaṃvidhānāṃ ca dharmāṇāṃ lābhī syām evaṃvidhaṃ eva śāstāram ārāgayeyaṃ mā virāgayeyam.*

70. Much the same occurs in the *Jyotiṣka-avadāna*. The Buddha explains that since in a previous life Jyotiṣka—then the householder Anaṅgaṇa (Sinless)—"made offerings to the tathāgata Vipaśyin and then made a fervent aspiration, by the result of this action he was born in a family that was rich, wealthy, and prosperous" (*yad vipaśyini tathāgate kārāṃ kṛtvā praṇidhānaṃ kṛtaṃ tasya karmaṇo vipākenāḍhye mahādhane mahābhoge kule jātaḥ* | Divy 289.14–16).

71. In truth, the text seems to regard material wealth not as a cause for spiritual attainments but as a precondition. For example, in the beginning of the *Supriya-avadāna*, the caravan leader Supriya makes a promise that he will fulfill the material desires of all the inhabitants of Jambudvīpa. As he explains, "I will satisfy all beings with wealth" (*sarvasattvā mayā dhanena saṃtarpayitavyāḥ* | Divy 100.23)! This promise prompts Supriya to travel for one hundred years to find the necessary wealth—in this case, wish-fulfilling jewels. Supriya, however, doesn't merely make the world rich, he makes the world rich so that he can establish everyone on the proper path of morality. As the narrator explains, "Later, when the best of the most-treasured jewels of Jambudvīpa had been mounted on top of a flag, the entire multitude of people living in Jambudvīpa were fully satisfied with the special things that they desired. When the people living in Jambudvīpa were fully satisfied with these things, King Supriya established them on the tenfold path of virtuous actions" (*samanantaraṃ dhvajāgrāvaropite tasmin jambudvīpapradhānamaṇiratne kṛtsno jambudvīpanivāsī mahājanakāyo yathepsitair upakaraṇaviśeṣaiḥ saṃtarpita upakaraṇasaṃtarpitaś ca jambudvīpanivāsī janakāyaḥ supriyeṇa rājñā daśasu kuśaleṣu karmapatheṣu pratiṣṭhāpitaḥ* | Divy 122.9–13). While at first it seems that Supriya suffers from a merchant's conceit that everyone can be satisfied with money, the outcome of the story is more telling of a mercantile ethos that considers spiritual pursuits as a viable goal only for those whose material needs have been met. Yet, this is not a case of pragmatism in which material needs are constituted by food, shelter, and clothing. Here it is every imaginable item, whether a basic provision or a luxury good, that makes up the necessary base for spiritual conversion.

72. Divy 14.17–18, *yayā mayāryamahākātyāyanaṃ piṇḍakena pratipādya praṇīte* <*trāyastriṃśe*>[a] *devanikāye upapattavyam.*

[a]Following Divy-V 9.7. Divy 14.18, *trayastriṃśe*. Cowell and Neil (Divy 14n1) query *trayastriṃśaddevanikāye*.

73. The importance of making offerings to the noble Mahākātyāyana is further stressed by the disastrous results that are said to accrue from even criticizing this act. For example, the former brahman woman explains that her husband and son had rebuked her for making offerings to the noble Mahākātyāyana and as a result were reborn as hungry ghosts whose food is transformed into dung beetles and iron balls. While these examples of giving are all directed toward the noble Mahākātyāyana—and are perhaps indicative of some cultic behavior on his behalf—gifts that are offered to family members are also represented as being somehow sacrosanct. Though the benefits of making such gifts are left unstated, interrupting such acts of giving proves disastrous. The former brahman woman's daughter-in-law and maidservant had prevented gifts of food from being to delivered between the brahman woman and her relatives and as a result were reborn as hungry ghosts damned to consume only flesh and pus-and-blood.

74. Mil 35, *sampakkhandanalakkhaṇā saddhā*.

75. Divy 17.16–17, *amba tātānujāṇīdhvaṃ pravrajiṣyāmi samyag eva śraddhayā agārād anagārikām*. One could also take *samyag eva* more closely with *pravrajiṣyāmi* and translate this as "I want to go forth as a monk from home to homelessness in the proper way, out of *śraddhā*." In the Pali equivalent of this trope, K. R. Norman (1979: 329n26)

understands *saddhāya* to mean "gladly." For more on what it means of have "gone forth by reason of *saddhā*" (*saddhāpabbajita*), see Bode 1911.

76. Divy 341.20–21, *nāsti tathāgatasyaivaṃvidhaṃ prābhḥtaṃ yathā vaineyaprābhṛtam*.

CHAPTER 3

1. In the *Puggalapaññatti-aṭṭhakathā* (Pp-A 248), the commentary to the fourth book of the Theravādin Abhidhamma, *pasāda* and *saddhā* are equated—as the text records, *pasādo saddhāpasādo*. The two terms are also equated in the *Abhidharmakośa* (Abhidh-k 1148/viii.9c): "*śraddhā* is *prasāda*" (*śraddhāprasādaḥ*). Likewise, in the *Jñānaprasthānaśāstra* of Kātyāyanīputra (Jñ-pr i, 19), the most venerated of Sarvāstivādin Abhidharma texts, *śraddhā* is explained as "*prasāda* of mind" (*cetasaḥ prasādaḥ*). Though this last reference was cited by both Jayatilleke (1963: 385–386) and Dhadphale (1980: 44–45, 150), following La Vallée Poussin's translation of the *Abhidharmakośa* (1923–1931: ii, 106n3), I must confess that I myself was unable to find it.

2. As K. N. Jayatilleke (1963: 386) observes, "we find *cetaso pasāda* in the Nikāyas where we can expect *saddhā*." For example, the following occurs at the end of the *Madhupiṇḍaka-sutta* in the *Majjhima-nikāya* (MN i, 114): "Likewise, Bhante, an able-minded monk in the course of scrutinizing, with wisdom, the meaning of this discourse on the dhamma, would find satisfaction and *pasāda* of mind" (*evam eva kho bhante cetaso bhikkhu dabbajātiko yato yato imassa dhammapariyāyassa paññāya attham upaparikkheyya labetheva attamanataṃ labhetha cetaso pasādam*). Frank Hoffman (1987: 410) concurs: "There does not seem to be enough difference in the meaning of *pasāda* and *saddhā* in these passages [regarding *saddhā* in the *Majjhima-nikāya*] to worry that the former sometimes occurs. They both mean faith or confidence as applied to Buddha, Doctrine, and Order."

3. In the *Indrabrāhmaṇa-avadāna*, a brahman boasts that no one is his equal, so when he hears of the Buddha's good looks, he goes to see whether the Buddha is more handsome. Catching sight of the Buddha, he reflects, "The ascetic Gautama may be more beautiful than me, but he isn't taller" (*kiṃcāpi śramaṇo gautamo mamāntikād abhirūpataro noccatara iti* | Divy 75.6–7). He then tries to behold the top of the Buddha's head, but even climbing to a higher place, he still can't see it. The Buddha responds by telling him that the heads of buddhas can't be looked down upon, but that if he still desires to see the extent of the Buddha's body, he should look underneath the pit in his home where the *agnihotra* offering is made, and there he'll find a post made of *gośīrṣa* sandalwood. That post, the Buddha explains, "is the measure of the body received from the mother and father of the Tathāgata" (*tathāgatamātāpaitṛkasyāśrayasya pramāṇam iti* | Divy 75.15–16). The brahman is incredulous, but he quickly goes there and sees that everything was just as the Buddha had said. Then, the text records, "he became full of *prasāda*" (*so 'abhiprasannaḥ* | Divy 75.19). Though this incident has clear parallels with the accounts of the butcher, the adulterer, and the prostitute in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna*, here the brahman is not filled with *śraddhā*—as might be expected—but rather with *prasāda*. While this could be a case of synonymy between the two terms, on closer inspection it seems to be a coalescing of distinct but closely related terms and tropes.

4. According to Ludowyk-Gyomroi's assessment, *prasāda* is both cognitive and affective—not an either/or scenario as was discussed previously with regard to *śraddhā*. These respective features of *prasāda* are apparent in its frequent pairing with *citta*, which can be either "heart" or "mind." As Kevin Trainor (1989: 190n8) notes with regard to the Pali *vaṃsa* materials, "The psychological faculty called *citta* includes within its domian both cognitive and affective functions, though it is the latter function that comes to the fore, particularly when *citta* is contrasted with *mano*, which is identified with rationality."

5. One exception to these interpretations of *pasāda* is noted by C. A. F. Rhys Davids in her translation of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*. She remarks that the gloss on "eye" (*cakkhu*) at the beginning of chapter 2 in the *Aṭṭhasālinī* [= *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* Commentary] is "the only early instance of the word *pasādo*, meaning literally clearness, brightness, serenity, faith, being used to denote the receptive reacting sense-agency" (1900: 174n3).

6. In the very first story of the *Avadānaśataka*, the brahman Pūrṇa, who is wealthy, pious, and a "believer" (*śrāddhaḥ* | AvŚ 2.3), "hears praise of the virtues of the Blessed One and obtains great *prasāda*" (*bhagavato guṇasaṃkīrtanaṃ pratiśrutya mahāntaṃ prasādaṃ pratilabdhavān* | AvŚ 2.10), suggesting an aural, not visual, provenance for faith. Shortly thereafter, Pūrṇa meets the Buddha, beholds his appearance, and makes an offering, following the *prasāda* typology, but with no mention of the term. In what follows, the Buddha performs a miracle, and following the conventions in the *Divyāvadāna* for seeing solitary buddhas, Pūrṇa becomes "full of prasāda, and like a tree cut down at the roots . . . falls prostrate at the feet of the Blessed one and begins to make a fervent aspiration" (*prasādajātaḥ mūlanikṛtta iva drumo . . . bhavataḥ pādayor nipatya praṇidhiṃ kartum ārabdhaḥ* | AvŚ 3.16–4.1). While *prasāda* occurs frequently in the *Avadānaśataka*, where it is often generated by seeing the Buddha or his miracles (e.g., AvŚ 4.12, 8.10, 10.12), the text does not evince the systematization of *prasāda* that is evident in the *Divyāvadāna*. For a French translation of the text, see Féer 1891.

7. For example, one particular typology of *pasāda* is found in the *Mahāvaṃsa*, the "Great Chronicle" of Buddhism in Sri Lanka. The text, according to Trainor, "repeatedly evokes the emotions of *saṃvega* and *pasāda*," and as Trainor (1997: 82–83) remarks, "these two emotions taken together represent two significant aspects of the Theravāda traditions's understanding of what it means to 'take refuge' in the Triple Gem." Trainor explains, "It is the experience of fear or agitation (*saṃvega*) that arises when one recognizes the contingent and transient nature of all phenomena, as manifested in sickness, old age, death, etc., that provides the impetus for the taking of refuge in the path that leads to complete liberation from these ills. It is, in turn contemplation on the nature of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṇgha that gives rise to the feeling of serene joy (*pasāda*) as one takes refuge in them and sets out on the path that leads to nibbāna."

8. Divy 2.26, 26.2–3, 58.2, 99.17–18, etc.

9. Divy 153.21–22, 108.9, etc.

10. Divy 167.15, etc.

11. Divy 74.23, etc.

12. Divy 9.13, 11.1, etc.

13. Divy 114.23, 115.21, etc.

14. Divy 9.13–1, 11.1–2, 12.16, etc.

15. Divy 148.10, 182.3–4, 267.17, etc., *prāsādikaḥ prāsādikaparivāraḥ*.

16. Divy 198.19–20, *prāsādikaḥ*.

17. Divy 13.9 and 82.13–14, *kāyaprāsādikaś cittaprāsādikaḥ*. The power of the Buddha's senior disciples to instill *prasāda* in others or cause them to refute it is addressed in the *Svāgata-avadāna*. When some non-Buddhist renunciants hear that the beggar Svāgata (Welcome), whom they disparagingly refer to as Durāgata (Unwelcome), has become a Buddhist monk, they remark, "The ascetic Gautama has said that his order instills *prasāda* all around. But how is this supposed to instill *prasāda* all around? Now beggars, even ones like Durāgata, go forth as monks in it" (*śramaṇo bhavanto gautama evam āha sāmantaprāsādikaṃ me śāsanam ity atra kiṃ sāmantaprāsādikam*[a] *ity asya yatredānīṃ durāgataprabhṛtayo 'pi kroḍamallakāḥ pravrajantīti* | Divy 181.14–16)! The narrative voice also explains that "when there is a senior disciple who is [great] like Mount Sumeru, many people experience *prasāda*" (*sumeruprakhye mahāśrāvake mahājanakāyaḥ prasādaṃ pravedayate*[b] | Divy 181.18–19). Likewise, later in the story, "the Blessed One magically creates a hut made of leaves [over the venerable Svāgata who is drunk] so that no one would see him and then refute their *prasāda* in the teachings" (*bhagavatā suparṇikā kuṭir nirmitā maitaṃ kaścid dṛṣṭvā śāsane 'prasādaṃ pravedayiṣyatīti* | Divy 190.12–13).

[a]In the *Arthaviniścaya-sūtra, samantaprāsādika* appears twice in descriptions of the Buddha. It is the thirty-ninth of the eighty minor marks (Samtani 1971: 64), and it also occurs, oddly, in a description of the thirty-third of the thirty-two marks of a great man (Samtani 1971: 305). According to the commentary (Samtani 1971: 306), "[A great man] instills *prasāda* everywhere because he has a form of which one never tires. In other words, he is *prasādanīya*" (*asecanakarūpatvāt sarvataḥ prāsādikaḥ prasādanīya ityarthaḥ*). In his study of the *Svāgata-avadāna*, Kenneth Ch'en (1945–47: 271) translates this term as "universally beautiful." Cf. Sv i, 284.

[b]The corresponding Tibetan (D nya 26b4) is *smras pa skyed par byed pas*. Ch'en (1945–47: 272n109) suggests, "It may mean 'to make their favors known by talking,' and this would correspond to Skt. *prasādam*."

18. Divy 13.9–11, *cittam abhiprasannam*.

19. Divy 96.12, *cittāny abhiprasādya*.

20. Divy 516.11–12, *prāsādikaṃ pradarśanīyam*.

21. Divy 516.14–15, *dṛṣṭvā ca punaḥ prītiprāmodyajātaḥ | sa saṃlakṣayati | yādṛśo 'yaṃ śramaṇaḥ prāsādikaḥ pradarśanīyaḥ sakalajanamanohārī*.

22. Vin i, 195, *pāsādikaḥ pasādanīyam*.

23. Divy 132.27, *cittaprāsādikaḥ kāyaprāsādikaḥ*.

24. Divy 133.7, *kāyikī teṣāṃ mahātmanāṃ dharmadeśanā na vācikī*.

25. Divy 133.7–11, *sa vitatapakṣa iva haṃsarāja upari vihāyasam udgamya jvalanatapanavarṣaṇavidyotanaprātihāryāṇi kartum ārabdhaḥ | āśu pṛthagjanāvarjanakarī ṛddhiḥ | te mūlanikṛttā iva drumāḥ pādayor nipatya praṇidhānaṃ kartum ārabdhāḥ*.

26. A householder in the *Svāgata-avadāna*, for example, throws an ailing solitary buddha out of his house and tells him, "Go live among the beggars" (*kroḍamallakānāṃ madhye prativaseti* | Divy 192.4)! Undeterred, the solitary buddha reflects, "This poor householder is [spiritually] beaten and battered. He should be rescued" (*hato 'yaṃ tapasvī*

gṛhapatir upahataś cābhyuddhāro 'sya kartavya iti | Divy 192.5–6). To this end, he performs the standard-issue miracles of a solitary buddha, and the householder beseeches him to alight. When the solitary buddha once again returns to land, the householder honors him with offerings and then falls at his feet and makes a fervent aspiration—that he will suffer no consequences from such an offense and that his good deed will lead him to reap certain benefits. For other instances of this trope, see Divy 313.12–25 and 539.5–12.

27. Divy 275.17–18, "A monk is not to display magical power in front of a householder. Whoever does so commits a transgression" (*na bhikṣuṇā āgārikasya purastād ṛddhir vidarśayitavyā darśayati sātisāro bhavati*).

28. In the story, the householder Jyotiṣka announces that he has placed a bowl made of *gośīrṣa* sandalwood and filled with jewels on top of a pillar, and that whoever can retrieve it by making use of his magical powers can keep it. The venerable Daśabala Kāśyapa decides, "I will fulfill this desire of his" (*tad asya manorathaṃ pūrayāmīti* | Divy 275.9–10), and then stretches out his arm, like the trunk of an elephant, and retrieves it. This brief episode is peculiar. Daśabala Kāśyapa (Pali, Kassapa Dasabala) is a name generally used to designate the twenty-fourth buddha, and the Buddha Kāśyapa does figure in a number of stories in the *Divyāvadāna* (Divy 22–24, 342–343, 346–348). Here, however, the character is said to be an ordinary monk, but the name Daśabala designates one "possessing the ten powers [of a Buddha]." With this in mind, perhaps Daśabala Kāśyapa's actions are merely expedient means, for Jyotiṣka, the intended beneficiary of his actions, does goes forth as a monk in the Buddha's order and eventually become an arhat.

Similarly, in the story of Piṇḍola Bharadvāja in the *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā* (Dhp-a 199–203; trans. in Burlingame 1969: iii, 35–38), a disciple of the Buddha uses his magical powers to retrieve a wooden bowl that a layman has placed out of reach in a bamboo tree and dared anyone to retrieve. Here too, the Buddha condemns such a use of miraculous powers. In this case, however, the Buddha then exempts himself from this restriction, and in what follows performs an impressive series of miracles.

29. Likewise, in the *Prātihārya-sūtra*, one of only two sūtras included in the *Divyāvadāna*, the Buddha defeats a group of six heretical monks in a competition of miracles. At the end of the story, the Buddha finally triumphs by creating an enormous array of buddhas who each in turn perform a variety of activities—including that same set of miracles described above. This miracle causes the heretic Pūraṇa to flee and fret, "The ascetic Gautama will convert my disciples" (*śramaṇo gautamo madīyāñ chrāvakān anvāvartayiṣyati* | Divy 164.17–18)! This prediction comes true, and soon thereafter the Buddha gives a discourse on the dharma that leads "many hundreds and thousands of beings [to accept] the refuges as well as the precepts" (*prāṇiśatasahasraiḥ śaraṇagamanaśikṣāpadāni* | Divy 166.14–15).

30. Divy 77.13, *cittam abhiprasādayiṣyanti*.

31. Divy 389.72, *rajñāḥ prasādavṛddhyartham*.

32. Divy 23.13–14, *bhūyasyā mātrayābhiprasannaḥ*.

33. Divy 71.23, *abhiprasannaḥ*. One who has *prasāda* is referred to as *prāsādajāta* ("one in whom *prasāda* has arisen"), or as *prasanna* or *abhiprasanna*—past passive participles of the same root (*pra* + √*sad*) being used as substantives. As with the addition of *abhi* to √*śrad*, the addition of the prefix *abhi* to *pra* + *sad*, forming *abhi* + *pra* + *sad*, has

little effect on the meaning of the term. One could translate *abhi* as "fully" or "complete" (as in "to fully believe" or "to have complete faith"), but that would perhaps be too strong a reading. For the most part, the effect of the additional prefix is pleonastic.

34. Divy 530.30, *abhiprasannaḥ*.

35. Divy 397.19–20, *tasya bodhau viśeṣataḥ prasādajāta iha bhagavatānuttarā samyaksaṃbodhir abhisaṃbuddheti*. Cf. Aśokāv 93.3–4.

36. Divy 68.5–6, *teṣāṃ prasādasaṃjananārthaṃ bhagavān nirmitaṃ darśanaṃ visarjayati*. Cf. Divy 138.12–13, 265.25, and 367.3–4 (= Aśokāv 32.11–12). For more on the Buddha's smile, see Strong 1989: 201–204.

37. Divy 166.12, *mahājanakāyasya tathābhiprasannasya*.

38. Divy 226.27, *atīva prasāda utpannaḥ*.

39. Divy 226.28, *prasādīkṛtacetaḥ*.

40. Divy 73.21–22, *atīte 'dhvany anenāham ekayā gāthayā stutaḥ*.

41. Divy 73.27–29, *brāhmaṇa śītakālo vartate gacchāsya rājñāḥ <kaccid anukūlaṃ subhāṣitaṃ>*[a] *kṛtvā kadācit kiṃcic chītatrāṇaṃ saṃpadyata iti*.

[a]Following the Tibetan (Shackleton Bailey 1951: 86), *rjes su mthun pa'i legs par smra ba*. Divy 73.28, *kaścid anukūlaṃ bhāṣitam*.

42. Divy 74.3–4, *sarvalokasya priyo manāpaś ca*.

43. Divy 74.6–10,

airāvaṇasyākṛtitulyadeho rūpopapanno varalakṣaṇaiś ca |
<lakṣmīpraśasto>[a] *'si mahāgajendra varṇapramāṇena surūparūpam*[b] *iti ||*

tato rājābhiprasanno gāthāṃ bhāṣate |

yo me gajendro dayito manāpaḥ prītiprado dṛṣṭiharo narāṇām |
tvaṃ bhāṣase varṇapadāni tasya dadāmi te grāmavarāṇi pañceti ||

[a]Following the Tibetan (Shackleton Bailey 1951: 86), *bkra shis rab tu bsngag*. Divy 74.7, "I mark you as praised" (*lakṣe praśasto*).

[b]Following the manuscripts (Divy 74n2), read *surūparūpam*. Cowell and Neil (Divy 74.7) emend to the vocative *surūparūpa*.

44. Another example of *prasāda* arising through aural contact occurs in the *Cūḍapakṣa-avadāna*. One day when the learned brahman Mahāpanthaka isn't instructing his five hundred students in the recitation of brahmanical mantras, he happens to meet a Buddhist monk who explains to him in detail the tenfold path of virtuous actions. At that time, "he becomes filled with *prasāda*" (*abhiprasannaḥ* | Divy 487.20).

45. Divy 277.23–278.4, *brāhmaṇaḥ kathayati | kim etad evaṃ bhaviṣyati | jyotiṣkaḥ kathayati | brāhmaṇa tava pratykṣīkaromi paśyeti | tenāsāv aparibhukta uparivihāyasā kṣiptaḥ | vitānaṃ kṛtvāvasthitaḥ | paribhuktaḥ kṣiptaḥ kṣiptamātraka eva patitaḥ | brāhmaṇo dṛṣṭvā paraṃ vismayam āpannaḥ kathayati | gṛhapate maharddhikas tvaṃ mahānubhāva iti | jyotiṣkaḥ kathayati | brāhmaṇa punaḥ paśyainaṃ yo 'sāv aparibhuktaka iti sa kaṇṭakavāṭasyopariṣṭāt kṣipto 'sajjamāno gataḥ | so 'nyaḥ kṣiptaḥ kaṇṭake lagnaḥ | sa brāhmaṇo bhūyasyā mātrayābhiprasannaḥ kathayati | gṛhapate maharddhikas tvaṃ mahānubhāvo yat tavābhipretaṃ tat prayaccheti*.

46. The *Pali Text Society Dictionary* derives *asecanaka* from √*sic* in the sense of "to sprinkle." Hence, *a* + *secana* + *ka* would mean "unmixed, unadulterated, i.e., with full and unimpaired properties, delicious, sublime, lovely." More compelling, however, would be to derive it from √*sec* in the sense of "to satiate" (Bailey 1958: 530–531). This would yield the meaning "insatiable"—an etymology that accords well with citations in Prakrit, Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Chinese. The commentary to the *Deśīnāmamālā* (DNM 31/i.72), for example, explains that "the word *āseaṇaya*, which means the seeing of whom is unquenchable [i.e., someone you never tire of seeing], is derived from the word *āsecanaka* [and along with a second item noted just before this] is accordingly not mentioned [in the *kārika* verse itself]" (*āseaṇayaśabdaś cāvitṛptadarśanārtha āsecanakaśabdabhava iti noktau*). The *Amarakośa* (Ak 495/iii.1.53,) records that "something is *asecanaka* in that there is no end to the satisfaction [one gets] from seeing it" (*tad asecanakaṃ tṛpter nāsty anto yasya darśanāt*). The Tibetan version of the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* (N 104b1; cited in GM iii 4, 34n1) translates *asecanaka* as "not satisfied" (*chog mi shes* —> Skt., *atṛpta*). And, lastly, the *Mahāvyutpatti* (Mvy §392) glosses *asecanaka rūpena* in the Tibetan with "not being satisfied upon seeing the physical form" (*sku byad blta bas chog mi shes pa*), and in the Chinese, much the same (Bailey 1958: 530). Notice that even in those cases when sight is not mentioned, as in the *Deśīnāmamālā* and the *Amarakośa*, *asecanaka* or a variant of the term is closely linked to the phenomenon of seeing. By contrast, the Pali materials don't seem to make that connection. There *asecanaka* is frequently defined as "possessing strength" (*ojavan*) (CPD, s.v., *asecanaka*), though Brough and Norman translate the term as "never causing surfeit" (Brough 1962: 193 and Norman 1971: 73–74).

Also noteworthy is that the expression *asecanakadarśana* occurs in a verse in the *Udānavarga* (Uv 437/xxxiii.20), one of the few texts cited in the *Divyāvadāna* (Divy 34.29, 20.23), but *not* in very similar verses in parallel texts such as the Pali *Dhammapada* (Dhp 380–381/xxv.9), the Prakrit *Dhammapada* (Dhp-Pr 12/i.70), the Gāndhārī *Dhammapada* (Dhp-G 128/i.70), and the Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit *Dharmapada* (Dhp-BHS 7/iv.59). Unexpectedly, rather than connecting *asecanakadarśana* with an object that instills *prasāda*, it connects having *prasāda* with achieving a state that is *asecanakadarśana*. To quote:

> A monk dwelling in loving kindness
> who has *prasāda* in the Buddha's teaching
> may attain the state that is peace,
> which one never tires of seeing.
>
> *maitrāvihārī yo bhikṣuḥ prasanno buddhaśāsane* |
> *adhigacchet padaṃ śāntam asecanaksadarśanam* ||

47. Divy 226.26–29, *taṃ dṛṣṭvā dvātriṃśallakṣaṇālaṃkṛtam asecanakadarśanam atīva prasāda utpannaḥ | yato 'sau prasādīkṛtacetā yānād avatīrya taṃ bhagavantaṃ taiś catūratnamayaiḥ puṣpair avakīrati*.

The *Dharmaruci-avadāna* (Divy 251.20–21) describes a similar encounter with the perfectly awakened Dipaṅkara: "Given room, the young brahman Sumati saw the Blessed One—a sight one never tires of seeing—and was filled with intense *prasāda*. Filled as he was with *prasāda*, he tossed five lotuses at the Buddha" (*labdhāvakāśaś ca sumatir māṇavo*

bhagavantam asecanakadarśanaṃ dṛṣṭvātīva prasādajātaḥ | prasādajātena ca tāni pañca padmāni bhagavataḥ kṣiptāni). Likewise, in the *Māndhātā-avadāna* (Divy 227.26–28): "When [the merchant Autkarika] saw Lord Vipaśyin—a sight one never tires of seeing—great *prasāda* arose in him. Full of *prasāda*, he took a handful of mung beans and tossed them in Lord Vipaśyin's bowl" (*bhagavantaṃ vipaśyinam asecanakadarśanarūpaṃ dṛṣṭvādhikaḥ prasāda utpannaḥ | prasādajātena tasya mudgānāṃ muṣṭiṃ gṛhītvā pātre prakṣiptaḥ*).

48. Divy 23.12–16, *tena sa dṛṣṭaḥ stūpo 'secanakadarśanaḥ | dṛṣṭvā ca bhūyasyā mātrayābhiprasannaḥ . . . tena prasādajātena yat tatrāvaśiṣṭam aparaṃ ca dattvā*.

49. Divy 334.14–16, *uktaṃ bhagavatā pañcāsecanakā darśanena |*

> *hastī nāgaś ca rājā ca sāgaraś ca śiloccayaḥ |*
> *asecanakā darśanena buddhaś ca bhagavatāṃ vara iti ||*

50. Divy 547.12–13, *asecanakādarśanā buddhā bhagavantaḥ*.

51. Divy 547.13–15, *te yam evāvayavaṃ bhagavataḥ paśyanti tam eva paśyanto na tṛptiṃ gacchanti | te na śaknuvanti bhagavato nimittam udgrahītum*.

52. Th-a i, 147, *rūpakāyasampattidassanena atitto*.

53. Th-a i, 148, *tassa saddhābalavabhāvato eva vipassanāvīthiṃ na otarati*.

54. MN i, 24; i, 184; i, 205; etc., *esāhaṃ bhavantaḥ gotamaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi dhammaṃ ca bhikkhusaṅghaṃ ca | upāsakaṃ maṃ bhavaṃ gotamo dhāretu ajjatagge pāṇupetaṃ saraṇaṃ gataṃ iti*. Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi (1995: 107, 277, 297, etc.) translate this as "I go to Master Gotama for refuge and to the Dhamma and to the Sangha of bhikkhus. From today let Master Gotama remember me as a lay follower who has gone to him for refuge for life."

55. In the *Sahasodgata-avadāna*, for example, the householder Sahasodgata pledges, "I take refuge in the Lord Buddha, the dharma, and the community of monks. Hereafter and for as long as I live and breathe, consider me a disciple who is full of *prasāda*" (*eṣo 'ham buddhaṃ bhagavantaṃ śaraṇaṃ gacchāmi dharmaṃ ca bhikṣusaṃghaṃ copāsakaṃ ca māṃ dhārayādyāgreṇa yāvajjīvaṃ prāṇopetam abhiprasannam iti* | Divy 311.6–8). Elsewhere the vow ends with "who has taken the refuges" (Divy 53.8, 72.2–3, 76.1, 128.22–23, etc.) or "who has taken the triple refuge" (Divy 543.10, etc.).

56. For more on declarations of truth, also know as vows of truth, see Burlingame 1917 and Brown 1968 and 1978.

57. Divy 154.18–26, *upasaṃkramya kālasya rājakumārasya hastapādān yathāsthāne sthāpayitvā evaṃ vada | ye kecit sattvā apadā vā dvipadā vā bahupadā vā arūpiṇo vā rūpiṇo vā saṃjñino vā asaṃjñino vā naiva saṃjñino vā nāsaṃjñinas tathāgato 'arhan samyaksaṃbuddhaḥ teṣāṃ sattvānām agra ākhyāyate | ye kecid dharmā asaṃskṛtā vā saṃskṛtā vā virāgo dharmas teṣāṃ agra ākhyātaḥ | ye kecit saṃghā vā gaṇā vā yugā vā parṣado vā tathāgataśrāvakasaṃghas teṣām agra ākhyātaḥ | anena satyena satyavākyena tava śarīraṃ yathāpaurāṇaṃ syāt*.

58. These principal trusts in Pali are as follows (AN ii, 34; cf. trans. in Gethin 1992: 112–113):

> [i] Monks, in so far as there are beings with no feet, two feet, four feet, or with many feet; with form or formless; conscious, unconscious, or neither-conscious-nor-unconscious—of these the Tathāgata is said to be the best, an arhat, a perfectly awakened being. Monks, whoever has

pasāda in the Buddha, has *pasāda* in what is best, and for those who have *pasāda* in what is best, the best is the result.

[ii] Monks, in so far as there are conditioned dhammas, the noble eightfold path is said to be the best of these. Monks, whoever has *pasāda* in the noble eightfold path . . . the best is the result.

[iii] Monks, in so far as there are dhammas either conditioned or unconditioned, detachment is said to be the best of these dhammas, that is . . . nibbāna. Monks, whoever has *pasāda* in dhamma . . . the best is the result.

[iv] Monks, in so far as there are communities or groups, the community of the disciples of the Tathāgata is said to be the best of these, that is . . . a field of merit for the world. Monks, whoever has *pasāda* in the monastic community . . . the best is the result.

[i] *yāvatā bhikkhave sattā apadā vā dipadā vā catuppadā vā bahuppadā vā rūpino vā arūpino saññino vā asaññino nevasaññināsaññino vā tathāgato tesaṃ aggam akkhāyati arahaṃ sammāsaṃbuddho | ye bhikkhave buddhe pasannā agge te pasannā | agge kho pasannānaṃ aggo vipāko hoti |* [ii] *yāvatā bhikkhave dhammā saṃkhatā ariyo aṭṭaṅgiko maggo tesam aggaṃ akkhāyati | ye bhikkhave ariye aṭṭhaṅgike magge pasannā . . . aggo vipāko hoti |* [iii] *yāvatā bhikkhave dhammā saṃkhatā vā asaṃkhatā vā virāgo tesaṃ dhammānam aggam akkhāyati yadidaṃ . . . nibbānaṃ | ye bhikkhave dhamme pasannā . . . aggo vipāko hoti |* [iv] *yāvatā bhikkhave saṃghā vā gaṇ ā tathāgatasāvakasaṃgho tesam aggam akkhāyati yadidaṃ . . . puññakkhettaṃ lokassa | ye bhikkhave saṃghe pasannā . . . aggo vipāko hoti.*

59. Divy 155.1–6.

60. Divy 155.6–7, *anena satyena satyavākyena.*

61. For more on this incident, see Teiser 2006: 67–75.

62. Divy 304.27, *lokākhyānakathā.*

63. Divy 304.28–29, <*tasyātitvāreṇa*>[a] *gacchato 'nupadaṃ gacchanti mā lokākhyāyikāṃ na śroṣyāma iti.*

[a]Conjecture. Divy 304.28, *tasyātisvāreṇa.*

64. Divy 305.5–9, *sa kathayati | tāta kiṃ dvidaivasikāṃ bhṛtiṃ dadāsīti | sa kathayati | putra na dvidaivasikāṃ dadāmy api tu prasanno 'haṃ prasannādhikāraṃ karomīti | sa kathayati | tāta yadi tvaṃ mamābhiprasanno yāvat tava gṛhe karma kartavyaṃ tāvat tavaiva haste tiṣṭhatu.*

65. The sense of *adhikāra* here is difficult to capture with a single-word translation in English. It is one's duty, one's obligation, what one simply does, yet it neither has a sense of coercion nor of being something that one could easily refuse to do. It is a duty, an impetus, and a compulsion, but also a privilege. David Eckel and David Seyfort Ruegg (personal communication) suggest the French *métier.*

66. See, for example, DPPN, s.v. *upananda.*

67. Śay-v 38.12–13, *yasya prasannaḥ prasannādhikāraṃ karoti tasyaiva sa upanandasya tu vārṣiko lābhaḥ.*

68. Divy 307.19–20, *rājagṛhe ca parva pratyupasthitam iti na kiṃcit krayeṇāpi labhyate.*

69. Divy 307.29–308.8, *te tasya sakāśam upasaṃkramya kathayanti | gṛhapatiputra dīyatām asmākam bhuktaśeṣaṃ yad asti mūlyaṃ prayacchāma iti | sa kathayati | nāhaṃ mūlyenānuprayacchāmy api tv evam eva prayacchāmīti | te tenānnapānena saṃtarpitā gṛhapater gatvā kathayanti | tasya te gṛhapate lābhāḥ sulabdhā yasya te niveśane buddhapramukho bhikṣusaṃgho 'nnapānena saṃtarpita imāni ca pañcabaṇikśatānīti | sa kathayati | anena gṛhapatiputreṇa lābhāḥ sulabdhā anena buddhapramukho bhikṣusaṃgho 'nnapānena saṃtarpito na mayeti.*

70. For more on the logic of commercial exchange, see Gregory 1982.

71. Divy 308.13–309.1, *te pūrvam evābhiprasannāḥ sārthavāhena ca protsāhitā iti tair yathāsaṃbhāvyena maṇimuktādīni ratnāni dattāni mahān rāśiḥ saṃpaṇṇaḥ | sārthavāhaḥ kathayati | putra gṛhāṇeti | sa kathayati | tāta na mayā mūlyena dattam iti | sārthavāhaḥ kathayati | putra na vayaṃ tava mūlyaṃ prayacchāmo yadi ca mūlyaṃ gaṇyate ekena ratnenedṛśānāṃ bhaktānām anekāni śatāni saṃvidyante kiṃtu vayaṃ tavābhiprasannāḥ prasannādhikāraṃ kurmo gṛhāṇeti | sa kathayati | tāta mayā buddhapramukho bhikṣusaṃgho bhojito deveṣūpapatsye iti tasmād avaśiṣṭaṃ yuṣmabhyaṃ dattaṃ yadi grahīṣyāmi sthānam etad vidyate yad deveṣu nopapatsye | sārthavāhaḥ kathayati | putrābhiśraddadhāsi tvaṃ bhagavataḥ | tātābhiśraddadhe | gaccha bhagavantaṃ pṛccha | sa yena bhagavāṃs tenopasaṃkrāntaḥ | upasaṃkramya bhagavataḥ pādau śirasā vanditvaikānte niṣaṇṇaḥ | sa gṛhapatiputro bhagavantam idam avocat | bhagavan mayā buddhapramukhaṃ bhikṣusaṃghaṃ bhojayitvā yad annapānam avaśiṣṭaṃ tad baṇijāṃ dattam te mama prasannāḥ prasannādhikāraṃ kurvanti kiṃ kalpate tan mama grahītum āhosvin na kalpata it | bhagavān āha | yadi prasannāḥ prasannādhikāraṃ kurvanti gṛhāṇa.*

72. Alfred Gell makes the intriguing suggestion that "seeing" (*darśan*) in the Hindu context is also equated with gift exchange. Gell (1998 116) notes that "*darshan* is a gift of an offering, made by the superior to the inferior, and it consists of the 'gift of the appearance' imagined as a material transfer of some blessing."

73. Abhidh-k 652–653/iv.45–46.

74. Abhidh-k 662–663/iv.55.

75. Godelier (1999: 54–56), for example, explains this need in terms of reciprocity, and Marshall Sahlins (1972: 160–161) explains it in terms of profit. For a list of more of Mauss's critics, see Godelier 1999: 226n75.

76. According to Godelier (1999: 42), the problem of why a debt created by a gift is not cancelled or erased by an identical counter-gift "may be hard to understand for a mind immersed in the logic of today's commercial relations, but it is basically simple. If the counter-gift does not erase the debt, it is because the 'thing' given has not really been separated, completely detached from the giver. The thing has been *given without really being 'alienated'* by the giver."

77. For example, later in the *Sahasodgata-avadāna*, after Sahasodgata has received a dharma-teaching from the Buddha and has "seen the truth" (*dṛṣṭasatyaḥ*), he expresses the magnitude of the gift he has received from the Buddha:

> What the Blessed One has done for the likes of me, Bhadanta, neither my mother nor my father have done, nor a dear one, nor any of my kinsmen or relatives, nor any king, or any deities, or deceased ancestors, nor

ascetics or brahmans. Oceans of blood and tears have dried up! Mountains of bones have been scaled! The doors to the lower realms of existence have been closed! The doors to heaven and liberation have been opened! And I have been established among gods and mortals! I have crossed over, Bhadanta! I have crossed over! And so, I take refuge in the Lord Buddha, in the dharma, and in the community of monks. Hereafter and for as long as I live and breathe, consider me a disciple full of *prasāda*.

idam asmākaṃ bhadanta na mātrā kṛtaṃ na pitrā neṣṭena na svajanabandhuvargeṇa na rājñā na devatābhir na pūrvapretair na śramaṇabrāhmaṇair yad bhagavatāsmākaṃ kṛtam | ucchoṣitā rudhirāśrusamudrā laṃghitā asthiparvatāḥ pihitāny apāyadvārāṇi vivṛtāni svargamokṣadvārāṇi pratiṣṭāpitāḥ smo devamanuṣyeṣv abhikrānto 'haṃ bhadantābhikrānta eṣo 'haṃ buddhaṃ bhagavantaṃ śaraṇaṃ gacchāmi dharmaṃ ca bhikṣusaṃghaṃ copāsakaṃ ca māṃ dhārayādyāgreṇa yāvajjīvaṃ prāṇopetam abhiprasannam iti | Divy 310.30–311.8.

Notice as well that Sahasodgata has apparently developed *prasāda* not from seeing the Buddha as a *prāsādika* object, but from receiving from him the gift of a dharma-teaching.

78. Much like the case in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* in which possessing *śraddhā* motivates Koṭikarṇa to offer himself as a new disciple, possessing *prasāda* can also lead one to do the same. In the *Dharmaruci-avadāna*, for instance, Dharmaruci "sees monks diligently engaged in reading, recitation, and concentration and becomes filled with intense *prasāda*. He then approaches a monk and says, 'Noble sir, I want to go forth as a monk' " (*bhikṣūn pāṭhasvādhyāyamanasikārodyuktān dṛṣṭvātīvaprasādajātaḥ | bhikṣum upasaṃkramyaivaṃ vadati | ārya pravrajitum icchāmi* | Divy 236.20–22). Likewise in the *Cūḍāpakṣa-avadāna*, a monk shows the twelve links of interdependent arising to the brahman Mahāpanthaka, and the latter,"filled with *prasāda*, says, 'Monk, may I renounce, take ordination, and become a monk according to the dharma and monastic discipline that have been so well expressed' " (*so 'bhiprasannaḥ kathayati | bho bhikṣo labheyāhaṃ svākhyāte dharmavinaye pravrajyām upasaṃpadaṃ bhikṣubhāvaṃ* | Divy 487.24–26).

79. Divy 228.5–14, *yo 'sav otkariko baṇig aham eva tena kālena tena samayena | yan mayā vipaśyinaḥ samyaksaṃbuddhasya prasādajātena mudgānāṃ muṣṭiḥ pātre prakṣiptā tasmāc catvāro mudgāḥ pātre patitā avaśiṣṭā bhūmau patitāḥ tasya karmaṇo vipākena caturṣu dvīpeṣu rājyaiśvaryādhipatyaṃ kāritam | yac cāsau mudgaḥ pātrakaṇṭakam āhatya bhūmau patitas tasya karmaṇo vipākena trayastriṃśān devān adhirūḍhaḥ | saced bhikṣavaḥ sa mudgaḥ pātre patito 'bhaviṣyan na bhūmau sthānam etad vidyate yad deveṣu ca manuṣyeṣu ca rāyjaiśvaryādhipatyaṃ kāritam abhaviṣyat.*

80. Divy 482.13–16, *vipulaṃ dānaṃ dadāti vipulabhogavipākapratilābhasaṃvartanīyam | annadānaṃ dadāti kṣuttarṣavicchedavipākapratilābhasaṃvartanīyam | pānadānaṃ dadāti sarvatra jātiṣu tṛḍvicchedavipākapratilābhasaṃvartanīyam.*

81. Divy 69.28–70.1, *asāv ānanda brāhmaṇadārikā anena kuśalamūlena trayodaśakalpān vinipātaṃ na gamiṣyati.*

82. Divy 73.14–15, *asāv anena kuśalamūlena viṃśatikalpaṃ vinipātaṃ na gamiṣyati.*

83. Divy 23.16–20, *tena prasādajātena yat tatrāvaśiṣṭam aparaṃ ca dattvā mahatīṃ pūjāṃ kṛtvā praṇidhānaṃ ca kṛtam | anenāhaṃ kuśalamūlenāḍhye mahādhane mahābhoge kule jāyeyam evaṃvidhānāṃ ca dharmāṇāṃ lābhī syām evaṃvidham eva śāstāram ārāgayeyaṃ mā virāgayeyam iti*.

84. Divy 23.22–24, *yad anena kāśyapasya samyaksaṃbuddhasya stūpe kārāṃ kṛtvā praṇidhānaṃ kṛtaṃ tasya karmaṇo vipākenāḍhye mahādhane mahābhoge kule jātaḥ*.

85. For example, King Vāsava (Divy 65.5–11); King Dhanasammata (Divy 66.13–20); a woman dependent on the city of Śrāvastī for alms (Divy 90.1–6); a householder and that householder's wife, son, daughter-in-law, servant, and maid (Divy 133.11–134.14); and so on.

86. Divy 82.13–14, *kāyaprāsādikaś cittaprāsādikaḥ*.

87. Elsewhere in the *Divyāvadāna* (Divy 61.28–29, 395.23 [= Aśokāv 90.6]) it is said that Mahākāśyapa is "foremost of those who preach the virtues of the purified" (*dhūtaguṇavādinām agraḥ*). Among these virtues—which are, more accurately, a code of ascetic practices—is "eating in a single place" (*ekāsanika*). If Mahākāśyapa observed this ascetic code, he would eat only once a day and in only one place, and hence whatever the beggar woman offered him would have to suffice as his meal for the day (see Ray 1994: 145n39). For more on the *dhutaguṇa*s, see Ray 1994: 293–323.

88. Divy 82.17–83.2, *tata āyuṣmatā mahākāśyapena tasyāś cetasā cittam ājñāya pātram upanāmitam | yadi te bhagini parityaktaṃ dīyatām asmin pātra iti | tatas tayā cittam abhiprasādya tasmin pātre dattaṃ makṣikā ca patitā | sā tām apanetum ārabdhā | tasyās tasminn ācāme 'ṅguliḥ patitā | saṃlakṣayati | kiṃ cāpy āryeṇa mama cittānurakṣayā na cchorito 'pi tu na paribhokṣayatīti | athāyuṣmatā mahākāśyapena tasyāś cetasā cittam ājñāya tasyā eva pratyakṣam anyatamaṃ kuḍyamūlaṃ niśritya paribhuktam | sā saṃlaṃayati | kiṃ cāpy āryeṇa mama cittānurakṣayā paribhuktaṃ nānenāhāreṇāhārakṛtyaṃ kariṣyatīti | athāyuṣmān mahākāśyapas tasyāś cittam ājñāya tāṃ nagarāvalambikām idam avocat | bhagini prāmodyam <utpādayāmi>[a] ahaṃ tvadīyenāhāreṇa rātriṃdivasam atināmayiṣyāmīti | tasyā atīvaudbilyam utpannaṃ mamāryeṇa mahākāśyapena piṇḍapātaḥ pratigṛhīta iti | tata āyuṣmati mahākāśyape cittam abhiprasādya kālaṃ gatā tuṣite devanikāye upapannā*.

[a]Following GM iii 1, 81.12. Divy 82.28–29, *utpādayasi*. Without this emendation, one would be forced to misread the verb as an imperative—as in "be happy" or "you should be happy."

For a discussion of this story in the context of the various representations of Mahākāśyapa, see Ray 1994: 109–110 and Wilson 2003.

89. This is not to say, though, that *prasāda*-initiated offerings are not in some sense valuable, for they are valuable in terms of an economy of merit. Working from Georg Simmel's (1979: 62ff.) idea that "value" is a function of the resistance that has to be overcome in order to gain access to an object, a certain resistance can be postulated for merit. This resistance isn't due to a high price, for merit cannot simply be purchased; rather, this resistance occurs because merit is accrued through meritorious deeds, and the performance of such deeds takes time, resources, and effort. This accruing of merit, in turn, is what allows one to advance in the karmic hierarchy of existence. Even the Buddha is said to have "come into being by [performing] many hundreds of meritorious deeds" (*anekapuṇyaśatanirjāta* | Divy 56.21–22). But in the case of encountering *prāsādika* objects, large amounts of merit can be earned in a short time, with few resources and almost no effort, approaching what Alfred Gell calls "the magic-standard of

zero work." As Gell (1992: 58) explains, "All productive activities are measured against the magic-standard, the possibility that the same product might be produced *effortlessly*, and the relative efficacy of techniques is a function of the extent to which they converge towards the magic-standard of zero work for the same product . . ." (italics added).

90. Divy 90.1–3.

91. Divy 366.9–11 (= Aśokāv 31.7–8).

92. Divy 67.14–15.

93. Divy 461.25.

94. Divy 72.12–14.

95. Divy 79.21–24 (cp. Divy 469.5–8),

evaṃ hy acintiyā buddhā buddhadharmā 'py acintiyā |
acintiye prasannānāṃ vipāko 'pi acintiyaḥ ||
teṣām acintiyānām apratihatadharmacakravartinām |
samyaksaṃbuddhānāṃ nālaṃ guṇapāram adhigantum ||

96. Divy 344.18–21, *dṛṣṭvā cāsya cittam abhiprasannam | prasādajātaḥ saṃlakṣayati | muktā hy ete āryakā evaṃvidhād duḥkhāt | cyutaḥ kālagato vārāṇasyāṃ ṣaṭkarmanirate bhāhmaṇakule jātaḥ.*

97. Divy 534.9–11, *santi tasmin antaḥpure striyo yā mamāntike prasannacittālaṃkāraṃ kṛtvā kāyasya bhedāt sugatau svargaloke deveṣūpapannāḥ.*

98. Divy 359.25–28 (= Aśokāv 22.1–3), *śṛṇu saumya tvaṃ hi bhagavaty asakṛd asakṛd avaskhalito na ca buddhāv āropitānām akuśalānāṃ dharmāṇām anyat prakṣālanam anyatra tathāgataprasādād eva.*

99. In Reiko Ohnuma's study of "gift of the body" stories, she identifies one genre of stories in which "the *gift is never initiated once the donor's willingness to give has been established*." As Ohnuma explains, "the bodhisattva's mere willingness to give performs the same function as the actual gift itself" (2007: 75–76; italics in original).

100. Roots of virtue can be created through offerings or states of mind or some combination of the two. As Luis Gomez (1996: 332) observes, roots of virtue are "those acts and states of mind that are good (*kuśala*) by virtue of the good intentions that motivate them and generate merit as well as a general tendency towards the practice of virtue and the attainment of buddhahood."

101. Divy 313.19–25, *sa gṛhapatiputras tīvreṇāśayena pādayor nipatya praṇidhānaṃ kartum ārabdhaḥ | yan mayā evaṃvidhe sadbhūtadakṣiṇīye kharā vāg niścāritā mā tasya karmaṇo bhāgī syāṃ yat tv idānīṃ cittam abhiprasāditam anenāhaṃ kuśalamūlenāḍhye mahādhane mahābhoge kule jāyeyam evaṃvidhānāṃ ca dharmāṇāṃ lābhī syāṃ prativiśiṣṭataraṃ cātaḥ śāstāram ārāgayeyaṃ mā virāgayeyam iti.*

CHAPTER 4

1. Divy 67.1ff.

2. Divy 136.1ff.

3. Divy 246.5ff.

4. Divy 83.2–4, *sā śakreṇa devendreṇa dṛṣṭā ācāmaṃ pratipādayantī cittam abhiprasādayantī kālaṃ ca kurvāṇā no tu dṛṣṭā kutropapanneti.*

5. Divy 83.7, *tathā hy adhastād devānāṃ jñānadarśanaṃ pravartate no tūpariṣṭāt.*

6. This is apparently a reference to the fact that the character here referred to as Śakra has been appointed to the post of being Śakra because of his past actions. This position, however, is an office with term limits. When the karma that Śakra has accrued to be in this position runs outs, he will, quite literally, fall from office.

7. Divy 83.15–18, *ime ca tāvad manuṣyāḥ puṇyāpuṇyānām apratyakṣadarśiṇo dānāni dadati puṇyāni kurvanti | ahaṃ <pratyakṣadarśy eva>*[a] *puṇyānāṃ svapuṇyaphale vyavasthitaḥ kasmād dānāni na dadāmi puṇyāṇi vā na karomi.*

[a]Following GM iii 1, 83.7–8 and Divy 84.13 and 85.21. Divy 84.17, *pratyakṣadarśanena.*

8. Divy 83.25–26, *kṛpaṇānāthavanīyakajanānukampakaḥ.*

9. Divy 84.8–16, *sa kathayati | kauśika kiṃ duḥkhitajanasyāntarāyaṃ karoṣi yasya te bhagavatā dīrgharātrānugato vicikitsākathaṃkathāśalyaḥ samūla ārūḍho yathāpi tat tathāgatenārhatā samyaksaṃbuddhena | ārya mahākāśyapa kiṃ duḥkhitajanasyāntarāyaṃ karomi | ime tāvan manuṣyāḥ puṇyānām apratyakṣadarśino dānāni dadati puṇyāṇi kurvanti ahaṃ pratyakṣadarśy eva puṇyānāṃ kathaṃ dānāni na dadāmi | nanu coktaṃ bhagavatā |*

karaṇīyāni puṇyāṇi duḥkhā hy akṛtapuṇyatāḥ |
kṛtapuṇyāni modante asmin loke paratra ca ||

10. Divy 82.8–9, *gacchāmi kṛpaṇajanasyānugrahaṃ karomi.*

11. See *Visuddhimagga* xii.126–127 (Vism 403–404; trans. in Ñāṇamoli 1979: 441); the *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā* on verse 56 (Dhp-a i, 423–430; trans. in Burlingame 1969: ii, 86–89); the *Udāna* (Ud i, 4 and 29–30; trans. in Masefield 1994a: 5 and 49–50); and the commentary on these passages in the *Udāna-aṭṭhakathā* (Ud-a 60–62 and 195–202; trans. in Masefield 1994b: 96–99 and 486–494).

12. If it is the case that Mahākāśyapa is a follower of the *dhūtaguṇa* ascetic practices and can only eat once a day, then his acceptance of Śakra's offering would mean that he couldn't accept anyone else's offering until the following day.

13. Ud-a 199 and Dhp-a 426, *bhāriyaṃ te, kosiya, kammaṃ kataṃ duggatānaṃ sampattiṃ vilumpantena: ajja mayhaṃ dānaṃ datvā kocid eva duggato senāpatiṭṭhānaṃ vā seṭṭhiṭṭhānaṃ vā labheyyā ti.*

14. Ud-a 199, *mayā duggatataro atthi bhante.*

15. Ud-a 199, *kathaṃ tvaṃ duggato devarajjasirim anubhavanto ti.*

16. Dhp-a i, 426–427.

17. Ud 30, *amhākampi bhante kassapa puññena attho amhākampi puññena karaṇīyaṃ ti.*

18. Ud-a 199–200 and Dhp-a i, 427, *evaṃ sante pi ito paṭṭhāya mayhaṃ mā evaṃ vañcetvā dānam adāsī ti.*

19. Dhp-a i, 427, *vañcetvā tumhākaṃ dāne dinne mayhaṃ kusalam atthi nātthīti | atthāvuso ti.*

20. In the Pali *Vinaya*, generally speaking, monks are enjoined to accept those offerings that are given to them unless those offerings are wrongly acquired or wrongly prepared. Questions regarding the stock of merit of potential donors are not considered (cf. Cullavagga viii.6 [Vin ii, 251–216]; trans in Rhys Davids and Oldenberg 1987: 289–292). One well-known canonical example of alms being refused involves the monk Subhadda. The Buddha rejected his offering of food because it had been acquired

through ill-gotten gain (DPPN, s.v. *subhadda*). Likewise in the *Cūlavaṃsa* (Cūlv ii, Ch. 45, lines 30–35; trans. in Geiger 1930: i, 91–92), the monastic community refused alms from King Dāṭhopatissa II. This is done to protest the king's decision to build a structure for another monastic community on their property without their consent (see Rahula 1956: 68–69). This practice of "overturning the almsbowl" (*pattanikkujjana*) also has a more recent legacy. In the early 1990s, monks in Burma refused to accept the offerings of government officials as a protest against the government's refusal to concede defeat in the recent elections. My thanks to Patrick Pranke for these references.

21. Divy 85.20–23, *anyatamaś ca kroḍamallako vṛddhānte cittam abhiprasādayaṃs tiṣṭhati | ayaṃ rājā pratyakṣadarśy eva puṇyānāṃ sve puṇyaphale pratiṣṭhāpito 'tṛpta eva puṇyair dānāni dadāti puṇyāni karoti*.

22. Divy 85.28–86.4, *tato bhagavatābhihitaḥ | mahārāja kasya nāmnā dakṣiṇām ādiśāmi kiṃ tavāhosvid yena tavāntikāt prabhūtataraṃ puṇyaṃ prasūtam iti | rājā saṃlakṣayati | mama bhagavān piṇḍapātaṃ paribhuṅkte ko 'nyo mamāntikāt prabhūtataraṃ puṇyaṃ prasaviṣyatīti viditvā kathayati bhagavan yena mamāntikāt prabhūtataraṃ puṇyaṃ prasūtaṃ tasya bhagavān nāmnā dakṣiṇām ādiśatv iti | tato bhagavatā kroḍamallakasya nāmnā dakṣiṇā ādiṣṭā | evaṃ yāvat ṣaḍ divasān*.

23. For more on the importance of making use of offerings, see chapter 5.

24. Divy 86.20–25, *tataḥ kroḍamallakaḥ kathayati | yady asya rājñaḥ prabhūtam antaś cāpeneyam asti santy anye 'py asmadvidhā duḥkhitakā ākāṅkṣante | kim arthaṃ na dīyate | kim anenāparibhogaṃ choriteneti | tasya kroḍamallakasya cittavikṣepo jāto na śakyaṃ tena tathā cittaṃ prasādayituṃ yathā pūrvam*.

25. Divy 86.28–87.2,

> *hastyaśvarathapattiyāyino bhuñjānasya puraṃ <sanaigamaṃ>*[a] *paśyasi |*
> *balaṃ hi rūkṣikāyā alavaṇikāyāḥ kulmāsapiṇḍakāyāḥ ||*

[a]Following GM iii 1, 86.11. Divy 87.1 reads *śanairgamaṃ* (mss., *sanairgamaṃ*).

26. Divy 87.3–6, *bahuśo bahuśo bhadanta bhagavatā rājñaḥ prasenajitaḥ kauśalasya niveśane bhuktvā nāmnā <dakṣiṇā ādiṣṭā>*[a] *| nābhijānāmi kadācid evaṃrūpāṃ dakṣiṇām ādiṣṭapūrvām*.

[a]Following GM iii 1, 86.15. Divy 87.5, *dakṣiṇām ādiṣṭo*.

27. Divy 88.16–17, *kāyaprāsādikaś cittaprāsādikaś ca*.

28. Divy 88.22–24, *tatas tena tīvreṇa prasādena sā 'lavaṇikā kulmāṣapiṇḍakā tasmai pratyekabuddhāya pratipāditā*.

29. Divy 88.25–89.1, *yo 'sau daridrapuruṣa eṣa evāsau rājā prasenajit kauśalas tena kālena tena samayena | yad anena pratyekabuddhāyālavaṇikā kulmāṣapiṇḍikā pratipāditā tena karmaṇā ṣaṭkṛtvo deveṣu trayastriṃśeṣu rājyaiśvaryādhipatyaṃ kāritavān ṣaṭkṛtvo 'syām eva śrāvastyāṃ rājā kṣatriyo mūrdhnābhiṣiktas tenaiva ca karmaṇāvaśeṣeṇaitarhi rājā kṣatriyo mūrdnābhiṣiktaḥ saṃvṛttaḥ | so 'sya piṇḍako vipakvaḥ*.

30. Divy 89.1–89.2, *tam ahaṃ saṃdhāya kathayāmi*.

31. Divy 89.18, *ekaikaś ca bhikṣuḥ śatasahasreṇa vastreṇācchāditaḥ*.

32. Divy 89.19, *dīpamālā*. In Maharashtra, the term refers to a structure often located outside of Hindu temples that resembles a Christmas tree with lamps at the end of each branch. Ratna Handurukande (1978: 77), however, translates the term as "rows of lamps."

33. Divy 89.21, *atīva duḥkhitā.*

34. Divy 89.27–90.1, *ayaṃ tāvad rājā prasenajit kauśalaḥ puṇyair atṛpto ’dyāpi dānāni dadāti puṇyāni karoti | yan nv aham api kutaścit samudānīya bhagavataḥ pradīpaṃ dadyām iti.*

35. Divy 90.4–11, *anenāhaṃ kuśalamūlena yathāyaṃ bhagavāñ śākyamunir varṣaśatāyuṣi prajāyāṃ śākyamunir nāma śāstā loka utpanna evam aham api varṣaśatāyuṣi prajāyāṃ śākyamunir eva śāstā bhaveyaṃ yathā cāsya śāriputramaudgalyāyanāgrayugaṃ bhadrayugam ānando bhikṣur upasthāyakaḥ śuddhodanaḥ pitā mātā mahāmāyā [kapilavastunagaraṃ]*[a] *rāhulabhadraḥ kumāraḥ putro [evaṃ mamāpi śāriputramaudgalyāyanāvagrayugaṃ bhadrayugaṃ syād ānando bhikṣur upasthāyikaḥ śuddhodanaḥ pitā mātā mahāmāyā kapilavastu nagaraṃ rāhulabhadraḥ kumāraḥ putraḥ]*[b] *yathāyaṃ bhagavān dhātuvibhāgaṃ kṛtvā parinirvāsyaty evam aham api dhātuvibhāgaṃ kṛtvā parinirvāpayeyam iti.*

[a]Following GM iii 1, 90.8. Divy 90.8, (omitted).

[b]Following GM iii 1, 90.8–11. Divy 90.9, (omitted).

36. Divy 90.14–15, *asthānam anavakāśo yad buddhā bhagavanta āloke śayyāṃ kalpayanti.*

37. Divy 90.23–27, *khedam ānanda āpatsyase | yadi vairambhakā api vāyavo vāyeyus te ’pi na śaknuyur nirvāpayitum prāg eva hastagataś cīvarakarṇiko vyajanaṃ vā | tathā hy ayaṃ pradīpas tayā dārikayā mahatā cittābhisaṃskāreṇa prajvalitaḥ.*

38. Divy 90.26, *mahatā cittābhisaṃskāreṇa.*

39. Divy 158.5, *sābhisaṃskāreṇa.* Cf. Divy 250.20 and 364.26.

40. Being poor is an indicator of a paucity of merit as is being born a female. In Buddhist narrative literature there is a persistent association of virtue with male sex (Mrozik 2006). For an excellent study of how virtue is gendered and embodied within Buddhism, see Mrozik 2007. For more on women vowing for buddhahood and not receiving predictions, see Derris 2000.

41. Divy 429.6–8 (= Aśokāv 126.1–2), *bhagavacchāsane śraddhā pratilabdhā . . . kena bhagavacchāsane prabhūtaṃ dānaṃ dattam.*

42. Divy 429.12–13 (= Aśokāv 126.6–7), *aham api koṭīśataṃ bhagavacchāsane dānaṃ dāsyāmi.*

43. In the prelude to the quinquennial festival, King Aśoka gets in a bidding war over the amount of his donation. As the king complains to his minister Rādhagupta, “Who is it that is so ignorant of the ways of the world that he contends with me” (*ko ’yam asmābhiḥ sārdhaṃ pratidvandvayaty alokajñaḥ* | Divy 403.18)? Clearly the king does not like to be outdone. For more on the quinquennial festival and the nature of giving, see Strong 1990.

44. Divy 430.12–13 (= Aśokāv 127.12), *sa ca me ’bhiprāyo na paripurṇaḥ.*

45. Divy 433.9–12,

dānenāham anena nendrabhavanaṃ na brahmaloke phalaṃ
kāṅkṣāmi drutavārivegacapalāṃ prāg eva rājaśriyam |
dānasyāsya phalaṃ tu <bhaktimahitam>[a] *yan me ’sti tenāpnuyāṃ*
cittaiśvaryam ahāryam āryamahitaṃ nāyāti yad vikriyām ||

[a]Following Aśokāv 132.3. Divy 433.10 reads *bhaktimahato.*

46. See, for example, a verse in the *Pāṃśupradāna-avadāna* (Divy 380.26–29 [cp. Aśokāv 52.17–20]) that nicely distinguishes between nāgas' *bhakti*—as a kind of clinging devotion—and King Aśoka's *śraddhā*—as a more mature understanding:

> Today in the village of Rāma the eighth stūpa stands,
> for at that time nāgas guarded it with *bhakti*.
> The king didn't take the relics from there;
> firm in his *śraddhā*, the king left them alone and withdrew.
>
> *rāmagrāme tv aṣṭamaṃ stūpam adya* |
> *nāgās tatkālaṃ bhaktimanto rarakṣuḥ* ||
> *dhātūny etasmān nopalebhe sa rāja* |
> *śraddhābhū rājā cintayati yas tv atatkṛtvā jagāma* ||

47. For example, King Aśoka, though he is a king, is elsewhere said to possess *prasāda* (Divy 380.1, 380.6, 289.27, 397.19, and 405.8 [= Aśokāv 51.11, 51.16, 82.7, 93.3, 103.14]). He is also said to have both *śraddhā* (Divy 419.14 [= Aśokāv 56.1, 126.1]) and—contrary to form—*prasāda* (Divy 382. 4 [= Aśokāv 71.1]) in the teachings of the Buddha. Furthermore, although *bhakti* is often represented as a mental state for the less karmically developed, in one instance Upagupta explains to Māra that "even a very small bit of *bhakti* [toward the Buddha] offers nirvāṇa to the wise as a result" (*svalpāpi hy atra bhaktir bhavati matimatāṃ nirvāṇaphaladā* | Divy 360.1–2 [= Aśokāv 22.7]). Then, in the very next line (Divy 360.2–4; cp. Aśokāv 22.8–9), Upagupta offers this conclusion:

> In short, the wicked things that you did here to the Sage,
> when your mind was blind with delusion,
> all of these have been washed away
> by the copious waters of *śraddhā* that have entered your heart.
>
> *saṃkṣepād yat kṛtaṃ te vṛjinam iha muner mohāndhamanasā*
> *sarvaṃ prakṣālitaṃ tat tava hṛdaye gataiḥ śraddhāmbuvisaraiḥ* |

48. For example, the well-known passage in which King Aśoka, in a previous life, offers a handful of dirt to a buddha contains no mention of *prasāda*. Rather, the verse that immediately follows the description of this event explains that the offering was made after he "developed *prasāda*" (*kṛtaprasādaḥ* | Divy 366.14)—an expression whose exact phrasing is unattested elsewhere in the text.

49. For example, in the *Meṇḍhaka-avadāna*, during a famine, King Brahmadatta becomes "filled with *prasāda*" (*abhiprasannaḥ* | Divy 135.10), when he hears that the householder Meṇḍhaka has presented alms to a solitary buddha, and that as a result, his treasuries and granaries have become full. Judging by the standards of the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna*, this is doubly odd: a king comes to possess *prasāda*, and he does so through sound and not sight. Additionally odd is that no mention is made of the king possessing *prasāda* in the nearly identical version of this story contained in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* (GM iii 1, 254.18). If the *Meṇḍhaka-avadāna* is, in fact, a reworking of this story in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*, why would a reference to *prasāda* have been added? Was this recension part of a faith-based initiative?

50. Divy 316.14–15, *bodhisattvo 'bhūt sarvaṃdadaḥ sarvaparityāgī niḥsaṅgaparityāgī*.

51. Divy 320.21–22, *candraprabho nāma rājā sarvaṃdado 'smīty ātmānaṃ pratijānīte.*

52. Divy 323.30–31, *paramatyāgaprativiśiṣṭaṃ tyāgaṃ parityaktukāmaḥ.*

53. Divy 324.9–10, *idaṃ brāhmaṇa śiro 'vighnataḥ sādhu pragṛhyatām uttamāṅgam iti.*

54. Besides benefiting himself, King Candraprabha's offering also has practical benefits for his subjects. Much in the same way that, after being charged with *prasāda*, the laity makes offerings to the monastic community until they offer themselves as monastics and can then be on the receiving end of the laity's offerings, King Candraprabha gives up his own life so that a stūpa can be constructed where he died, filled presumably with his bodily relics, and his subjects can go there, make offerings, "and be directed toward heaven and liberation" (*svargamokṣaparāyaṇā bhaveyuḥ* | Divy 326.29). So while the king's offering of his head and his life may seem extreme, it allows him not only to attain awakening but also to continue to serve his kingdom as a karmic generator for generations to come.

55. Nicholson Collier's (1998, chap. 1) work on intention was particularly helpful in formulating this distinction.

56. Giving with an ulterior motive is also shown to fail in James Laidlaw's (1995: 296–297) account of the giving practices of the Jain community in Jaipur. Among the five kinds of gifts (Skt., *dāna;* Hindi, *dān*) that he describes is the *kīrti-dān* or "gift given to earn one fame or status." According to Laidlaw, "*kirti-dan* is well-publicized charity with an eye to who will think well of it. It is 'advertisement,' it is 'not really *dan* at all,' it is 'just business,' it is 'almost sin (*pap*).' "

57. Divy 64.19–21, *kasya bhadanta sarve rājānaḥ pādayor nipatanti* | *rājño mahārāja cakravartinaḥ.*

58. Divy 65.10–14, *anenāhaṃ bhadanta kuśalamūlena rājā syāṃ cakravartīti* | *tatsamanantaraṃ ca śaṅkha āpūritaḥ* | *tato ratnaśikhī samyaksaṃbuddho vāsavaṃ rājānam idam avocat* | *bhaviṣyasi mahārājāśītivarṣasahasrāyuṣi prajāyāṃ śaṅkho nāma rājā cakravartīti.*

59. Divy 65.23–24, *kasya bhadanta sarve cakravartinaḥ pādayor nipatanti* | *tathāgatasya mahārājārhataḥ samyaksaṃbuddhasya.*

60. Divy 66, 19–22, *anenāhaṃ kuśalamūlena śāstā loke bhaveyaṃ tathāgato 'rhan samyaksaṃbuddha iti* | *ratnaśikhī samyaksaṃbuddhaḥ kathayati* | *bhaviṣyasi tvaṃ mahārājāśītivarṣasahasrāyuṣi prajāyāṃ maitreyo nāma tathāgato 'rhan samyaksaṃbuddha iti.*

61. For more on such stūpas, see Schopen 1997: 196n34.

62. Divy 196.23–197.1, *tathāgatam ākārataḥ samanusmaraṃś cittam abhiprasādayati ity api sa bhagavāṃs tathāgato 'rhan samyaksaṃbuddho vidyācaraṛasaṃpannaḥ sugato lokavid anuttaraḥ puruṣadamyasārathiḥ śāstā devamanuṣyāṇāṃ buddho bhagavān iti.*

63. Divy 197.5–6, *paśyata yūyaṃ bhikṣava etaṃ bhikṣuṃ keśanakhastūpe sarvaśarīreṇa praṇipatya cittam abhiprasādayantam.*

64. For more on the stratum of the golden wheel within cakravāla cosmology, see *Abhidharmakośa* iii.45–55 (Abhidh-k 451–455) and Kloetzli 1997: 32–39.

65. Divy 197.7–10, *anena bhikṣuṇā yāvatī bhūmir ākrāntā adho 'śītiyojanasahasrāṇi yāvat kāñcanacakram ity atrāntarā yāvantyo vālukās tāvanty anena bhikṣuṇā cakravartirājyasahasrāṇi paribhoktavyāni.*

66. Divy 197.10–14, *puruṣamātrāyāṃ yāvad gartāyāṃ na śakyate vālukā gaṇayituṃ kutaḥ punar aśītiyojanasahasrāṇi yāvat kāñcanacakram iti* | *kaḥ śakyate iyatkālaṃ saṃsāre saṃsaritum iti* | *atha te bhikṣavo na bhūyaḥ keśanakhastūpe kārāṃ kartum ārabdhāḥ.*

67. For more on this list of epithets of the Buddha, see Griffiths 1995 60–66.

68. Divy 196.21, *dhyānavimokṣasamādhisamāpattisukhāny anubhavanti*.

69. Curiously, in the version of this story preserved in the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* (Śikṣ 148.13–149.4; trans. in Bendall and Rouse 1971: 147–148), the passage following the Buddha's prediction in which the monks contemplate being stuck in saṃsāra for eons and eons, and in which the Buddha describes the nature of saṃsāra, is left out (Divy 197.9–18). In its place is the term *yāvat*—meaning "as far as" or "up until"—indicating that an elided passage is to be inserted. Generally, in the *Divyāvadāna*, the elided passage is a recurring trope, a stereotypical passage that can be easily recalled, but the passage in question here doesn't seem to be a trope or a stereotype. This raises the possibility that the passage in question was simply elided with the intention that it would remain elided. Could it have been that the compiler of the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* found this passage troubling?

70. Divy 197.14, *teṣāṃ bhikṣūṇāṃ cetasā cittam ājñāya*.

71. Divy 197.15–18, *anavarāgro bhikṣavaḥ saṃsāro 'vidyānivaraṇānāṃ sattvānāṃ tṛṣṇāsaṃyojanānāṃ tṛṣṇārgalabaddhānāṃ dīrgham adhvānaṃ saṃdhāvatāṃ saṃsaratāṃ pūrvā kotir na prajñāyate duḥkhasya*.

72. Divy 140.8–141.2, *eṣa ānanda govṛṣas tathāgatasyāntike prasannacittaḥ saptame divase kālaṃ kṛtvā cāturmahārājikeṣu deveṣūpapasyate vaiśravaṇasya mahārājasya putro bhaviṣyati | tataś cyutvā trayastriṃśeṣu deveṣūpapatsyate śakrasya devendrasya putro bhaviṣyati | tataś cyutvā yāmeṣu deveṣūpapastyate yāmasya devasya putro bhaviṣyati | tataś cyutvā tuṣiteṣu deveṣūpapatsyate sa tuṣitasya devasya putro bhaviṣyati | tataś cyutvā nirmāṇaratiṣu deveṣūpapatsyate sunirmitasya devaputrasya putro bhaviṣyati | tataś cyutvā parinirmitavaśavartiṣu deveṣūpapatsyate vaśavartino devaputrasya putro bhaviṣyati | tad anayā saṃtatyā navanavatikalpasahasrāṇi vinipātaṃ na gamiṣyati | tataḥ kāmāvacareṣu deveṣu divyaṃ sukham anubhūya paścime bhave paścime nikete samucchraye paścime ātmabhāvapratilambhe manuṣyatvaṃ pratilabhya rājā bhaviṣyati aśokavarṇo nāma cakravartī cāturarṇavāntavijetā dhārmiko dharmarājaḥ saptaratnasamanvāgataḥ . . . so 'pareṇa samayena dānāni dattvā cakravartirājyam apahāya keśaśmaśrūṇy avatārya kāṣāyāṇi vastrāṇi [ācchādya][a] samyag eva śraddhayā 'gārād anagārikāṃ pravrajya pratyekāṃ bodhiṃ sākṣātkariṣyaty aśokavarṇo nāma pratyekabuddho bhaviṣyati*.

[a]Following Divy 35.8. Divy 140.30, (omitted).

73. Divy 142.7–13, *yat punar idānīṃ mamāntike cittaṃ prasāditaṃ tasya karmaṇo vipākena divyaṃ mānuṣaṃ sukham anubhūya pratyekāṃ bodhim adhigamiṣyati | evaṃ hy ānanda tathāgatānāṃ cittaprasādo 'py acintavipākaḥ kiṃ punaḥ praṇidhānam | tasmāt tarhy ānanda evaṃ śikṣitavyaṃ yat stokastokaṃ muhūrtamuhūrtam antato 'cchaṭāsaṃghātamātram api tathāgatam ākārataḥ samanusmariṣyāmīty evaṃ te ānanda śikṣitavyam*.

74. See, for example, Akira Hirakawa's "The Rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism and Its Relationship to the Worship of Stūpas" (1963) and Gregory Schopen's (1999: 42) recent reply which, as he explains, "could have been entitled—in conscious contradistinction to Professor Hirakawa's old paper—'The Rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism and Its Relationship to the Rejection of the Worship of Stūpas.' "

75. Śikṣ 124.2–8, *adyatve 'pi ca sattvārthakṣamo bhavaty eva prasādakaratvāt | katham |*

sarvatrācapalo mandam atisnigdhābhibhāṣaṇāt |
āvarjayej janaṃ bhavyam ādeyaś cāpi jāyate[a] *||*

etad eva ca bodhisattvasya kṛtyaṃ yad uta sattvāvarjanam | yathā āryadharmasaṃgītisūtre āryapriyadarśanena bodhisattvena paridīpitam | tathā tathā bhagavan bodhisattvena pratipattavyaṃ yat sahadarśanenaiva sattvāḥ prasīdeyuḥ | tat kasmād hetoḥ | na bhagavan bodhisattvasyānyat karaṇīyam asti anyatra sattvāvarjanāt | sattvaparipāka eveyaṃ bhagavan bodhisattvasya dharmasaṃgītir iti.

[a]For the Tibetan of this verse, see D khi 71b7–72a1. My thanks to Sara McClintock for her thoughts on this passage.

76. As the young boy Brahmaprabha explains to his parents in the *Rūpavatī-avadāna*, nicely summing up the bodhisattva's path as it is represented in the *Divyāvadāna*, "I want to undergo austerities and perform difficult deeds for the benefit of all sentient beings" (*icchāmy ahaṃ sarvasattvānāṃ arthāya tapas taptuṃ duṣkaraṃ caritum* | Divy 477.15–16).

77. Divy 133.9–10, *āśu pṛthagjanāvarjanakarī ṛddhiḥ*.

78. Although a person in whom *prasāda* arises is certainly "fortunate" (*bhavya*), those who are too fortunate and do not suffer from a lack of merit, such as Śakra and King Prasenajit, are not "suitable" (*bhavya*) recipients of *prasāda*. This is the case in the *Divyāvadāna*, anyway, if not the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*.

79. This idea of *prasāda* as a form of intention is particularly well illustrated in a passage in the *Cūḍapakṣa-avadāna*. After the monk Panthaka, though slow to learn, directly experiences arhatship, the Buddha orders him to instruct a group of nuns. As he approaches the nuns, he sees that a seat of honor has been prepared for him, but he isn't sure how to respond to the gesture:

> The venerable Panthaka saw that a seat of honor had been arranged, and at the sight of it, he reflected, "Was this arranged by those possessed of *prasāda* or by those who are intent on being sarcastic?" He saw that it was arranged by those who were intent on being sarcastic. So the venerable Panthaka stretched out his arm like the trunk of an elephant and put the seat of honor in its proper place.
>
> *āyuṣmatā panthakena siṃhāsanaṃ dṛṣṭaḥ prajñaptakam | dṛṣṭvā saṃlakṣayati | kiṃ tāvat prasādajātābhiḥ prajñaptam āhosvit viheṭhanābhiprāyābhiḥ | paśyati yāvad viheṭhanābhiprāyābhiḥ | āyuṣmatā panthakena gajabhujasadṛśam bāhum abhiprasārya taṃ siṃhāsanaṃ yathāsthāne sthāpitam* | Divy 494.13–18 |

Here it is the intention behind the act that determines its karmic value. Since the nuns are sarcastic and not possessed of *prasāda*, the act of arranging a seat of honor has a negative valence.

80. Divy 67.15, *tīvreṇa prasādena*.

81. Divy 88.23, *tīvreṇa prasādena*.

82. I am still troubled, however, by the notion that an offering should be made as a result of *prasāda*. One possiblity is that an exclamation or thought can function as a gift, as in the case of Nāgakumāra in the *Nāgakumāra-avadāna*. Another possibility is that the attainment of awakening and its repurcussions can be a gift, as in the case of King Candraprabha in the *Candraprabhabodhisattvacaryā-avadāna*, whose awakening leads to the gift of his relics, allowing devotees to see them and be directed toward heaven and

liberation. Nevertheless, more thought needs to be given to these instances when the apparent duty of *prasāda* is not discharged.

83. In the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (Abhidh-k-bh 567; cf. AN iii, 415), *karma* is defined as follows: "What is action? It is said: 'It is volition and that which is produced through it' " (*kiṃ punas tat karma | ityāha | cetanā tatkṛtaṃ ca tat*). It is sometimes said, however, that the acts of a buddha are performed completely without "volition" and hence produce no karma. Such acts, that is, produce no results, so there is nothing to come to fruition in the future. They have no karmic residue. With no karma to be experienced in the future, the cycle of rebirth comes to a halt.

84. See, for example, AN iii, 415; Vism, chap. 19; Guenther 1976; and McDermott 1980; as well as Abhidh-k, chap. 4 and Dunne 2004: chap. 4.

85. Judith Irvine (1990: 154) makes a similar point in her work on the "affective registers" of the speaking styles of two Wolof castes—the nobles and griots. As she explains, "Extravagantly praising an addressee supposedly 'strengthens' the addressee and moves him or her to praiseworthy acts (such as distributing largesse). The audience, too, is moved and persuaded of the respectability of the person being praised." Likewise, this social logic leads to a form of entrapment: "Whether or not you 'really feel' the particular emotion you display, your subjective experience presumably includes knowing that you should sound like a griot (about whose emotionality you have certain beliefs). Your attitude toward griots, and toward being for the moment associated with them, must color your feelings toward other aspects of the situation" (1990: 56).

86. As Bourdieu (1991: 93–94) explains, "Bodily *hexis* is political mythology realized, *em-bodied*, turned into a permanent disposition, a durable manner of speaking, and thereby of *feeling* and *thinking*" (italics in original).

87. PTSD, s.v. *pasāda*.

88. BHSD, s.v. *prasāda*.

89. For more on *prasād* in Hinduism, see passages in the following: Appadurai and Breckenridge 1976; Babb 1975, 1986, and 1996; Bennett 1993; Erndl 1993; Hayley 1980; Khare 1976 and 1992; Marriott 1976; Östör 1980; and Raheja 1988. See also Andrea Pinkney's dissertation (2008) on the history and evolution of *prasāda* in Sanskrit literature.

90. For a case of "undeserved salvation," see Doniger 1993. Cf. Ramanujan 1991: 39–42.

91. For an interesting debate regarding the notion of "no-mind" and its application to the martial arts, see Keenan 1989; McFarlane 1990; Keenan 1990; and McFarlane 1991. For an instructive counter-perspective on such experiences, see Sharf 1995.

92. My sense of such a system is much like Alfred Gell's (1998: 7) notion of an "anthropology of art," which I discussed in the introduction. For one such study that considers Buddhist images that "serve as channels of powers in a cultic context," see Faure 1998 (citation from p. 784).

93. Generally, the exercise of such personal agency is crucial in determining the value of an individual's actions. For example, a monk's intention while performing an act that transgresses monastic law is important in determining the degree of his culpability (Harvey 1999).

94. Dhp-BHS 4 (vv. 1–2),

. . . manasā ca praduṣṭena bhāṣate vā karoti vā |
tato naṃ dukkham anveti cakram vā vahato padaṃ ||
. . . manasā ca prasannena bhāṣate vā karoti vā |
tato naṃ sukham anveti chāyā vā anapāyinī ||

95. Divy 19.4–5, *draṣṭavyā eva paryupāsitavyā eva hi tathāgatā arhantaḥ samyak-saṃbuddhāḥ.*

CHAPTER 5

1. I have considered some of these issues previously in Rotman forthcoming a.
2. Divy 76.10–80.10 and 465.10–469.19.
3. Divy 76.14–17 (cp. Divy 465.14–16), *dvātriṃśatā mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇaiḥ samalaṃkṛtam aśītyā cānuvyañjanair vīrājitagātraṃ vyāmaprabhālaṃkṛtaṃ sūryasahasrātirekaprabhaṃ jaṅgamam iva ratnaparvataṃ samantato bhadrakam.*
4. Divy 76.18–25 (cp. 465.16–22), *yadi bhagavantaṃ gautamam upetyābhivādayiṣyāmi karmaparihāṇir me bhaviṣyatīti | atha nopetyābhivādayiṣyāmi puṇyaparihāṇir bhaviṣyati | tat ko 'sāv upāyaḥ syād yena me karmaparihāṇir na syān nāpi puṇyaparihāṇir iti | tasya buddhir utpannā | atrastha evābhivādanaṃ karomy evaṃ na karmaparihāṇir na puṇyaparihāṇir iti | tena yathāgṛhītayaiva pratodayaṣṭyā tatrasthenaivābhivādanaṃ kṛtam abhivādaye buddhaṃ bhagavantam iti.*
5. Divy 76.25–77.3, *bhavakṣayakaraḥ kṣaṇa eṣa brāhmaṇaḥ saced asyaivaṃ samyakpratyayajñānadarśanaṃ pravartate etasmin pradeśe kāśyapasya samyaksaṃbuddhasyāvikopito 'sthisaṃghātas tiṣṭhatīty aham anenopakrameṇa vandito bhaveyam evam anena dvābhyāṃ samyaksaṃbuddhābhyāṃ vandanā kṛtā bhavet | tat kasya hetoḥ | asminn ānanda pradeśe kāśyapasya samyaksaṃbuddhasyāvikopito 'sthisaṃghātas tiṣṭhati.*
6. GM iii 1, 74.9–15, *kṣūṇa ānanda eṣa brāhmaṇaḥ | [anenopakramyāsmin pradeśe abhivādane kṛte] sati pratyātmaṃ jñānadarśanaṃ pravartate | etasmin pradeśe kāśyapasya samyaksaṃbuddhasyāvikopito 'sthisaṃghātas tiṣṭhatīti | aham anenopakramya vandito bhaveyam | evam anena dvābhyāṃ samyaksambuddhābhyāṃ vandanā kṛtā bhavet | tat kasya hetoḥ | asminn ānanda pradeśe kāśyapasya samyaksaṃbuddhasyāvikopito 'sthisaṃghātas tiṣṭhati.* Cf. trans. in Schopen 1997: 131.
7. See Manu ii.120–126; trans. in Doniger and Smith 1991: 30.
8. Divy 18.1, 18.22, 19.15, 21.3–4, etc.
9. Divy 49.4, *dūrād eva.*
10. Divy 137.1.
11. Divy 461.19.
12. Divy 77.3–7 and Divy 465.29–466.4, *athāyuśmān ānando laghu laghv eva caturguṇam uttarāsaṅgam prajñapya bhagavantam idam avocat | niṣīdatu bhagavān prajñapta evāsane evam ayaṃ pṛthivīpradeśo dvābhyāṃ samyaksaṃbuddhābhyāṃ paribhukto bhaviṣyati yac ca kāśyapena samyaksaṃbuddhena yac caitarhi bhagavateti.*
13. Divy 77.9–10 and Divy 466.6–7, *samyaksaṃbuddhasya śarīrasaṃghātam avikopitam.* What had been referred to as an "assemblage" (*saṃghāta)* of Kāśyapa's "bones" (*asthi*), which I translate as "skeleton," is now described as an assemblage of his

"remains" or "relics" (*śarīra*). The former term seems to be used to describe Kāśyapa's deceased form in a dormant invisible state, while the latter term may suggest that Kāśyapa's form, once visible, can be used as an object of ritual activity. See, for example, Schopen's (1997: 99–113) discussion of *śarīra-pūjā*.

14. Divy 77.12–13 and Divy 466.9–10, *dṛṣṭvā bhikṣavo cittam abhiprasādayiṣyanti*.

15. According to the account in the story, however, the nāgas did it, though they were acting at the Buddha's behest.

16. Divy 78.3–4 and 466.28, *duḥkhadaurmanasyam utpannam*.

17. Divy 78.6–16, *evaṃ ca cetasā cittam abhisaṃskṛtam asmān me padāvihārāt kiyat puṇyaṃ bhaviṣyatīti | atha bhagavāṃs tasya mahājanakāyasyāvipratisārasaṃjananārthaṃ tasya copāsakasya cetasā cittam ājñāya gāthāṃ bhāṣate |*

> *śataṃ sahasrāṇi suvarṇanṣkā jāmbūnadā nāsya samā bhavanti |*
> *yo buddhacaityeṣu prasannacittaḥ padāvihāraṃ prakaroti vidvān ||*

anyatamenopāsakena tasmin pradeśe mṛttikāpiṇḍo dattaḥ | evaṃ ca cittam abhisaṃskṛtaṃ padāvihārasya tāvad iyat puṇyam ākhyātaṃ bhagavatānyatra mṛttikāpiṇḍasya kiyat puṇ yaṃ bhaviṣyatīti | atha bhagavāṃs tasyāpi cetasā cittam ājñāya gāthāṃ bhāṣate |

> *śataṃ sahasrāṇi suvarṇaniṣkā jāmbūnadā nāsya samā bhavanti |*
> *yo buddhacaityeṣu prasannacitta āropayen mṛttikāpiṇḍam ekam ||*

18. Divy 78.24–79.16, *yo buddhacaityeṣu prasannacitta āropayen muktasupuṣparāśim . . . yo buddhacaityeṣu prasannacitto mālāvihāraṃ prakaroti vidvān . . . yo buddhacaityeṣu prasannacittaḥ pradīpadānaṃ prakaroti vidvān . . . yo buddhacaityeṣu prasannacitto gandhābhiṣekaṃ prakaroti vidvān*.

19. Divy 67.1ff., 136.20ff., 461.10ff., etc.

20. Although this passage in the *Divyāvadāna* makes no mention of the brahman having to come to "this place" to venerate two buddhas, the necessity of this act is implied, and it is made explicit in the corresponding passage in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*.

21. Divy 77.21 (cp. Divy 466.17–18), *udgṛhṇīta bhikṣava nimittam antardhāsyati*. This trope of grasping the "appearance" or "physical form" (*nimitta*) of an object before it disappears also occurs elsewhere in the *Divyāvadāna*. In the *Maitreya-avadāna* (Divy 57.1–2), the Buddha tells the monks to grasp the "appearance" (*nimitta*) of a "sacrificial post" (*yūpa*) for it will disappear; and then it does. In the *Nāgakumāra-avadāna* (Divy 543.18–21), a young nāga grasps the "appearance" (*nimitta*) of the place from which his instructor will disappear. He then waits there for his instructor and right there grabs hold of his robe and disappears with him. Cp. Divy 579.20.

22. Divy 90.23–27, *mahatā cittābhisaṃskāreṇa*.

23. Divy 78.17–18, *śrutvānekaiḥ prāṣiśatasahasrair mṛttikāpiṇḍasamāropaṇaṃ kṛtam*.

24. Divy 77.5–6 and Divy 466.2, *pṛthivīpradeśa*.

25. Dhp-A iii, 252, *sarīracetiyaṃ uddissacetiyaṃ paribhogacetiyan ti tīṇi cetiyāni*.

26. PJ I, 221–222 (also trans. in Ñāṇamoli 1960: 249–250), *tattha cayitabban ti cetiyaṃ, pūjetabban ti vuttaṃ hoti, citattā vā cetiyaṃ, taṃ pan' etaṃ tividhaṃ hoti: paribhogacetiyaṃ uddissakacetiyaṃ dhātu[ka]cetiyan ti, tattha bodhirukkho paribhogacetiyaṃ, buddhapaṭimā uddissakacetiyaṃ, dhātugabbhathūpā sadhātukā dhātu[ka]cetiyam*. Cf. Bentor 1994.

27. By contrast, however, in the last verses of the *Buddhavaṃsa* (Bv 101; trans. in Horner 1975: 98–99), one of the latest additions to the Pali canon, a wide array of "relics of use" (*paribhogikadhātu*) are enumerated. Among these objects are included the Buddha's almsbowl, walking staff, robes, bed covering, and drinking vessel, but it is only his "sitting mat" (*nisīdana*) that was apparently activated by the act of sitting.

28. This obligation to make use of offerings helps to explain an incident from the *Nagarāvalambikā-avadāna* that I discussed in the previous chapter. When King Prasenajit's ministers arrange to have half of the king's food offerings served to the monks and the other half thrown on the ground, the bowl-carrying beggar who on the previous six days had cultivated *prasāda* and earned more merit than the king can no longer do so. He laments that the food is being thrown away and not being made use of. His plea is not just about the politics of wasting food in the face of starving beggars but about the duty of monks to utilize offerings. It is a twofold lament, and as such he can no longer cultivate *prasāda*.

29. Richard Gombrich (2003: 430) considers the way that this doctrine of *paribhoga* allows merit to be detached from actor's intention, and necessitates "at least an amendment to the simple teaching that your karma is determined solely by your will." Gombrich (2003: 436–437) concludes by dismissing its legitimacy: "The detaching of karma from volition through the doctrine of merit consequent on use [*paribhogānvayaṃ puṇyaṃ*], which provides the only serious textual foundation for positing the non-communicator [*avijñapti*], seems to rest on an absurdly over-literal interpretation of a little poem extolling generosity, plus an illegitimate deduction from a text which is repeating the banal doctrine that it is best to make one's donations to holy monks—for that is analogous to sowing one's seed in a fertile field." It is likewise rejected in the *Kathāvatthu* (Kv vii.5; trans. in Aung and Rhys Davids 1979: 200–203).

30. A similar example can be found in the *Sahasodgata-avadāna*. There Sahasodgata is said to earn merit by offering certain objects so that they can be made use of by the Buddha and the monastic community. As the Buddha explains, "by providing bedding and seats to be made use of, you would be reborn among the god—much less providing food and drink to be made use of" (*śayanāsanaparibhogena tāvat tvaṃ deveṣūpapadyethāḥ prāg evānnapānaparibhogeneti* | Divy 307.14–16).

31. As Kern (1896: 91; cited in Schopen 1975: 151) noted more than a century ago, "All edifices having the character of a sacred monument are *caitya*s, but not all *caitya*s are edifices." What does constitute a shrine, at least to me, is still ambiguous.

32. Though the existence of footprint shrines is well attested in the Buddhism of South Asia, in this story the Buddha's standing in a place is not sufficient to transform it into a shrine. In his discussion of the status of the Buddha's footprint, Kinnard (2000: 42–43) explains that "as objects that have come into direct contact with the Buddha himself, they most logically fall into the *pāribhogika* [i.e., shrines by use] category (although these are clearly not objects that the Buddha used); however, since they serve to commemorate the Buddha's presence in a particular spot, they could also be considered *uddeśika* relics [i.e., memorial shrines]." In the case of the Toyikā story, however, the ground on which the Buddha stands falls into neither category. The Buddha comes into "direct contact" with the ground beneath his feet, yet it is not considered to be an object

"that the Buddha used," and no mention is made of its status as a memorial shrine. As John Strong (2004: 88) explains, "According to a number of Pali commentaries, the Buddha only leaves tracks when he consciously wants to do so for the sake of other beings; ordinarily his footprints cannot be perceived." Strong goes on to cite Sinhalese and Khmer texts that propose much the same.

33. See Legge 1965: 93 and Rongxi 1996: 173.

34. Although there are indications, Strong (1999: 12) notes, that "the veneration of previous Buddhas *apart* from Śākyamuni was potentially seen as schismatic, the cult of their relics *in conjunction* with that of Śākyamuni served to reinforce the charisma of the latter and give it chronological depth."

35. In a parallel trope, here a post is "raised" (*ucchrāpitā*) as an object of religious devotion, and later in the avadāna, in the Toyikā story, Kāśyapa's skeleton is "raised" (*ucchrāpitaḥ* | Divy 77.20) for similar purposes.

36. Divy 76.5–9, *tena viviktāvikāśe mahatā satkāreṇāsau yaṣṭir ucchrāpitā mahaś ca prajñapitaḥ | anyair api brāhmaṇagṛhapatibhiḥ kuśalam adhiṣṭhānāya bhavatv iti viditvā <kuśā>*[a] *baddhā | indreṇa brāhmaṇena yaṣṭyā mahaṃ prajñapita iti indramaha indramaha iti saṃjñā saṃvṛttā.*

[a]Following the Tibetan (Shackleton Bailey 1951: 86), *rtsa ku shas btags te*. Divy 76.8, *kulā baddhā*.

37. See, for example, the *Mahābhārata*, Ādiparva 57.17–27. For a detailed account of this festival, see Agrawal 1970: 49–66.

38. Schopen claims that since the versions of this story preserved in Mahāsaṅghika, Mahīśāsaka, Dharmaguptaka, and Theravāda sources contain references to a stūpa at Toyikā, this account in the *Divyāvadāna*, and hence its parallel in the *Mūlāsarvāstivāda-vinaya*, must be earlier because the site is still unadorned. As he explains, "It would appear, then, that the original version, represented now by the Mūlasarvāstivāda account, was revised at some point in time, and that once this revision was made in one school's account, it was accepted and incorporated into the accounts of all schools other than—and here probably only by an oversight—the Mūlasarvāstivāda" (1997: 29). Interestingly, in the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* (Divy 22.10ff.), mention is made of a stūpa for Kāśyapa at Vārāṇasī not Toyikā.

39. Divy 79.19–20 (cf. 469.3–4),

tiṣṭhantaṃ pūjayed yaś ca yaś cāpi parinirvṛtam |
samaṃ cittaṃ prasādyeha nāsti puṇyaviśeṣatā ||

A version of this verse, though with no mention of *pasāda*, also occurs in the daily liturgy at the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy (Hocart 1931: 20). My thanks to John Strong for this reference.

40. DN i, 140, *saddhassa kulaputtassa dassanīyāni saṃvejanīyāni*. For more on this passage, see Trainor 1997: 50, 175. The Sanskrit version of this passage (MPS iii, 388/41.5) also preserves the notion that these places should be sites of pilgrimage and practice—"Monks, these are the four spots of earth that a noble son or noble daughter who has *śraddhā* should visit during their lives" (*catvāra ime bhikṣavaḥ pṛthivīpradeśāḥ śrāddhasya kulaputrasya kuladuhitur vā yāvajjīvam <abhigamanīyā>*[a] *bhavanti*).

[a]Here I follow Schopen's emendation (1997: 137n7). Waldschmidt reads "should be brought to mind" (*anusmaraṇīyā*), but this is based on a reconstruction from the Tibetan *rjes su dran par 'gyur bar bya*.

41. DN i, 141, *idha tathāgato jāto 'ti ānanda saddhassa kulaputtassa dassanīyaṃ saṃvejanīyaṃ ṭhānam*.

42. DN i, 141, *bhikkhū bhikkhuniyo upāsakā upāsikāyo*.

43. DN ii, 141, *ye hi keci ānanda cetiyacārikam āhiṇḍatā passanacittā kālaṃ karissanti, sabbe te kāyassa bhedā paraṃ maraṇā sugatiṃ saggaṃ lokam uppajjissantīti*.

44. MPS 41.9 and 41.14 (iii, 390), *atrāntarā ye kecit prasannacittā mamāntike kālaṃ kariṣyanti te sarve svargopagā ye kecit sopadhiśeṣāḥ*. Cf. Schopen 1975: 174.

45. Schopen 1997: 139–140n14. Generally the object + *antike* precedes the verb to which it relates.

46. Divy 137.1, 140.8, 142.7, 315.2, 465.5, etc. There is also the problem of whether to interpret *antike* in the stereotyped expression "object + *antike* + *cittaprasannaḥ*" as "*prasāda* in mind in the presence of X" (e.g., "the Blessed One," "the Tathāgata," "me") or as "*prasāda* in mind with regard to X" or even "in X." Though the former often seems to be the correct interpretation, it isn't clear that this reading is always possible. An instance in the *Mākandika-avadāna* seems to allow only the latter reading (Divy 534.9–11). There the Buddha tells of the various fates of King Udayana's five hundred wives who burned to death in their harem: "Those women in the harem who had improved their minds through *prasāda in me*, were reborn after the dissolution of their bodies in a favorable existence among the gods in heaven. Some women in the harem had a nature like this (*santi tasminn antaḥpure striyo yā mamāntike prasannacittālaṃkāraṃ*[a] *kṛtvā kāyasya bhedāt sugatau svargaloke deveṣūpapannāḥ | evaṃrūpās tasminn antaḥpure striyaḥ santi*).

As it is explained later in the story, women in a king's harem cannot leave to visit monks, nor can monks enter such a harem to visit them. When a woman in the king's harem insists on seeing the monks, a peephole is made in one of the walls in the palace to allow her this opportunity (Divy 542.3–5). Hence, while it is possible that in the previous instance those five hundred women in the harem had developed *prasāda* in the presence of the Buddha, it seems very unlikely.

[a]The corresponding passage in the Tibetan (D nya 190b3) preserves the more standard trope: "with their minds possessed of *prasāda* in me, they died and their bodies dissolved . . ."

47. See Lüders 1940: 612–613; Bailey 1974: 16–17; von Hinüber 1981: nos. 13b, 13d, 60; and Waldschmidt 1967b: 424–427; cited in Schopen 1997: 147n75.

48. Thūp 246 (also trans. in Jayawickrama 1971: 133), *taṃ dhātupāṭihāriyaṃ disvā pasīditvā arahattaṃ pattā devamanussā dvādasakoṭiyo ahesum*. For more on *pasāda* and the power of emotions in the *Thūpavaṃsa*, see Berkwitz 2001.

49. Thūp 246 (also trans. in Jayawickrama 1971: 134), *udakapariyantaṃ katvā ayaṃ mahāpaṭhavī saṅkampi sampakampi sampavedhi, mahāsamuddo saṅkhubhi, ākāse vijjullatā niccharimsu, khaṇikavassaṃ vassi, cha devalokā ekakolāhalam ashosi | rājā etaṃ acchariyaṃ disvā pasanno attano kañcanamālikasetacchattena dhātuyo pūjetvā tambapaṇṇidīpe rajjaṃ sattāhaṃ datvā tiṃsasatasahassagghanakaṃ alaṅkārabhaṇḍaṃ omuñcitvā

pūjesi | tathā sabbā pi nāṭakak'itthiyo amaccā sesamahājano devā ca sabbābharaṇāni pūjesum.

50. Dhātuv 60 (also translated in Trainor 1997: 170),

adiṭṭhapubbaṃ satthussa pāṭihīraṃ mahājanā |
disvā pītiparā jātā pasādam ajjhaguṃ jine ||
pūjesuṃ gandhamālañ ca alaṃkāraṃ sakaṃ sakam |
sabbe vandiṃsu sirasā cetiyam īdisaṃ varam ||

51. As in the *Divyāvadāna*, here too witnessing miracles is shown to be a transformative experience. The difference is that while in the *Divyāvadāna prāsādika* individuals, such as the Buddha and solitary buddhas, perform such miracles, in these Pali materials the very relics of the Buddha perform such miracles. A propos of the previous discussion, however, individuals and their relics may be considered functionally equivalent.

52. I am more inclined to agree with Trainor's (1997: 169) assessment of a few pages earlier: "This mental state is also directly related to ritual action. The experience of *pasāda* is manifested in a desire to worship the Buddha, expressed in offerings."

53. Handurukande 1978: 76,

ye pañcagandhair anulepayanti |
sambuddhacaityaṃ manujāḥ prasannāḥ |
saugandhitāṅgā baladīptimantas |
te saṃbhavante paramārthalokāḥ ||

For more on the connection between avadānas and shrines, see Handurukande's (2000) edition and synopsis of three Sanskrit texts regarding *caitya* worship and Todd Lewis's (1994) work subtitled "A *Mahāyāna Avadāna* on *Caitya* Veneration from the Kathmandu Valley."

CHAPTER 6

1. BhP 10.29.4, *kṛṣṇagṛhītamanasaḥ*.
2. BhP 10.29.8, *govindāpahatātmāno na nyavartanta mohitāḥ*.
3. BhP (commentary on 10.29.10), *na hi vastuśaktir buddhim apekṣate | anyathā matvāpi pītāmṛtavad iti bhāvaḥ*. My thanks to Sheldon Pollock for this reference.
4. MBh 1.120.11, *tena susrāva reto 'sya sa ca taṃ nāvabudhyata*. My thanks to Laura Desmond for these references to the *Mahābhārata*.
5. This idea that seeing a woman can cause a man to ejaculate *automatically* is also found, quite famously, in Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*. Here, however, it is an image of a woman and not a woman in person that is the stimulus, and the response is conditioned, varying from person to person, and not—as seems to be for seers and sages in the *Mahābhārata*—innate. In Book 1, Episode 11 (1976: 82–83), Pirate Prentice is given an erotic picture of Scorpia Mossmoon, "wearing exactly the corselette of Belgian lace, the dark stockings and shoes he daydreamed about often enough, but never—No he never told her. He never told anyone. Like every young man growing up in England, he was conditioned to get a hard-on in the presence of certain fetishes . . ." Promptly

ejaculating, Pirate rubs his sperm on the picture and a secret message is revealed. He has activated Kryptosam, a product developed by IG Farben, with applications, apparently, in espionage. It's use, however, requires "a thorough knowledge of the addressee's psychosexual profile."

6. Though not concerned with visual practices, Philip B. Zarrilli's work on the Indian martial art form known as Kalarippayattu offers a good example of how such bodily practices are inscribed. Working from Richard Johnson's (1986: 44) idea that "subjectivities are produced, not given, and are therefore the objects of inquiry, not the premises or starting points," Zarrilli then goes on to demonstrate how martial arts, as a technology of the body, can be used "to gain agency or power *within certain specific contexts*" (1995: 189; italics in original).

7. As Georges Vigarello shows in an article concerning the inscription of physical rectitude in Europe in the Middle Ages, it is precisely such injunctions as "stand up straight" that are replete with political significance. In the sixteenth century, Vigarello (1989: 151) explains, "a new court nobility was being established as the world of chivalry faded, and the emergence of a formal etiquette and a courtier class seemed to generate rules of deportment for the body . . . [Henceforth,] a changed culture regulated the behavior of the nobility, which, in order to define itself, invented the idea of civility." In this world of practice, proper posture consisted of "holding oneself without effort . . . without any preliminary practice, without working on the positions . . . It is the opposite of affectation. It appears to have become second nature." In short, "bearing and presence should be hereditary" (1989: 152, 156). These practices of civility were then so thoroughly inscribed and inculcated that they came to seem completely natural, as though hard-wired into the bodily constitution of the aristocracy. Complicit in this project was the erasure of the very origins of such a project. In the seventeenth century, for example, children of the aristocracy were to be trained in this deportment "without being overly aware of its social purpose" (1989: 183). For if these practices could be learned or adopted they could hardly be natural and hereditary—hence "civility" could not be a fixed and inherent marker of the aristocracy. What follows in Vigarello's account is a fleet-footed transcendental move: as a means of erasing the purpose of these practices and avoiding the self-absorption that could come from such fastidious concern with the body, these practices are said to be god-given and performed for his benefit—"Physical uprightness is now suggested and imposed on a child in the name of religion" (1989: 184).

8. Divy 77.25–26, *sahāntaḥpureṇa kumārair amātyair bhaṭabalāgrair naigamajānapadaiś ca*.

9. As Bourdieu (1999: 164) explains, "Schemes of thought and perception can produce the objectivity that they do produce only by producing misrecognition of the limits of the cognition that they make possible, thereby founding immediate adherence, in the doxic mode, to the world of tradition experienced as a 'natural world' and taken for granted. The instruments of knowledge of the social world are in this case (objectively) political instruments which contribute to the reproductions of the social world by producing immediate adherence to the world, seen as self-evident and undisputed, of which they are the product and of which they reproduce the structures in a transformed form."

10. This point is made clear in MacKinnon's (1993: 95–96) discussion of a death penalty case in Indiana: " . . . a sex murderer claimed he could not be held responsible for his actions because he was a lifelong pornography user. To receive the death penalty, a defendant must be capable of appreciating the wrongfulness of his actions, but that is exactly what pornography was proven to destroy in the consumer by evidence in this case. Noting that the *Hudnut* court had accepted the view that pornography perpetuates 'subordination of women and violence again women' yet it is protected because its harm depends on 'mental intermediation,' this panel, which included Judge Easterbrook, faced the dilemma *Hudnut* placed them in: 'It would be impossible to hold both that pornography does not directly cause violence but criminal actors do, and that criminals do not cause violence, pornography does. The result would be to tell Indiana that it can neither ban pornography nor hold criminally responsible persons who are encouraged to commit violent acts because of pornography!' " In MacKinnon's view, the decision in *Hudnut* is wrong because pornography creates, to cite the words of the counsel in the above case, "a person who no longer distinguishes between violence and rape, or violence and sex" (1993: 96).

11. This concern is most evident in a parallel argument MacKinnon makes regarding hate speech. The meaning of hate speech itself, MacKinnon claims, isn't important; what is important is the meaning of hate speech *for* women. In other words, "it is its function." And as MacKinnon (1993: 29) concludes, "Law's proper concern here is not with what speech says, but what it does."

12. Following the work of Milman Parry and Albert Lord, there has been a tendency among scholars to attribute redundancy as a marker of oral transmission, but a redundant discourse can also be used "in order to reduce the 'openings' that might make a plural reading possible" (Suleiman 1993: 55). The former position is summed up by Jonathan Parry (1985: 208): "It would be nearer to the mark to say that in traditional India it was literary expression which was subordinated to the demands of oral transmission, for much of the sacred literature was composed in a form and with a redundancy which was clearly intended to facilitate memorization and faithful replication." Yet, this explanation does not account for the variety of levels at which redundancy occurs in avadānas and in Buddhist canonical literature in general. There is repetition at the level of sign (e.g., words, phrases, sentences), signifier (e.g., homonymny, alliteration, syntactic structures), and signified (e.g., synonymy and pleonasm) (Cohen 1976: 413–22). This notion that redundancy is a marker of the orality offers little explanatory force for explaining the repetition of extended passages, such as the occurrence of the Toyikā story in two different avadānas. John D. Smith (1977: 147) makes the same point about the repetition of "longer sequences" in the Pābūji epic from Rajasthan. The Toyikā story, for example, is not just repeated to "augment the possiblity of a correct reception of the message" (Suleiman 1993: 55), but to use the same story to create a variety of causal and contextual meaning within an extended discourse. Kirin Narayan (1989: 218–221) has demonstrated much the same effect in her description of the variety of meanings that different tellings of the same folk narrative can have in contemporary India. Though in a non-South Asian context, Robert Alter's work on repetition in the Hebrew Bible also attests to the variety of ends for which redundancy can be used (1981: 88–113).

13. In other words, the advocatory message that I mentioned previously to go and see *prāsādika* objects and make offerings.

14. The *Divyāvadāna*, for example, mentions and quotes a variety of Buddhist texts (e.g., Divy 20.23–24, 34.29–35.2).

15. As an interesting exception, there is a wonderful story in the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra* (k9, 125c; trans. in Lamotte 1949–1980: 541–542) in which a woman, owing to her insufficient merit, is simply unable to see the Buddha regardless of where he positions himself.

16. Divy 2.26, 11.1–2, 26.2–3, 58.2, etc., *abhirūpo darśanīyaḥ prāsādikaḥ*.

17. Divy 515.23–25, *iyaṃ dārikā na mayā kasyacit kulena dātavyā na dhanena nāpi śrutena kiṃ tu yo 'syā rūpeṇa samo vāpy adhiko vā tasya mayā dātavyeti*.

18. Divy 516.14, *dṛṣṭvā ca punaḥ prītiprāmodyajātaḥ*.

19. Divy 516.14–17, *yādṛśo 'yaṃ śramaṇaḥ prāsādikaḥ pradarśanīyaḥ sakalajanamanohārī durlabhas tu sarvastrījanasya patiḥ pratirūpaḥ prāg evānupamāyā labdho me jāmāteti*.

20. Divy 516.25, *maharṣiḥ*.

21. Divy 516.28–29, *nāsau bhaktāṃ bhajate kumārikāṃ nivarta yāsyāmaḥ svakaṃ niveśanam*.

22. Divy 517.11, 517.22–23, 518.5–6, *nāsau bhartā bhajate kumārikāṃ nivarta yāsyāmaḥ svaṃ niveśanam*.

23. Divy 519.13, *pratighavacanam*.

24. Divy 519.14–18,

> *dṛṣṭā mayā mārasutā hi vipra tṛṣṇā na me nāpi tathā ratiś ca |*
> *chando na me kāmaguṇeṣu kaścit tasmād imāṃ mūtrapurīṣapūrṇāṃ ||*
> <*spraṣṭum hi padbhyām*>[b] *api notsaheyam |*

[b]Following Tatelman 2005: 322 (cp. Divy 521.1). The Tibetan (D nya 172b) concurs. Divy 519.18, *praṣṭum hi yattām*.

25. For a prescription of this in the śāstras, see Kane 1930–1962: ii, 517–518.

26. Divy 519.7–10,

> *imāṃ bhagavān paśyatu me sutāṃ satāṃ satīm*[a] |
> *rūpopapannāṃ pramadām alaṃkṛtām* |
> *kāmārthinīṃ yad bhavate pradīyate*[b] |
> *sahānayā sādhur ivācaratāṃ bhavān*[c] |
> *sametya candro nabhasīva rohiṇīm* ||

[a]To preserve the meter, Thomas (1940: 655) suggests *imāṃ bhavān paśyatu me sutāṃ satīm*. That is, "Look at this virtuous daughter of mine." Thomas emends *bhagavān* to *bhavān* because "a brahmin, it is well-known, does not address the Lord as such, but as *bhavān*" (655). For the peculiar term *satāṃ*, Cowell and Neil (Divy 519n4) query *satyām*.

[b]Speyer (1902: 359) suggests *rūpopapannā pramadā alaṃkṛtā kāmārthinī yad bhavate pradīyate*.

[c]Speyer (1902: 359) suggests *sahānayā sādhu cared ratiṃ bhavān*. Also possible is *sahānayā sādhur ivācared bhavān*. For the Tibetan of this verse, see D nya 172a7.

27. While the Buddha is referred to as an "ascetic" (*śramaṇa*), Mākandika is described as a "wandering mendicant" (*parivrājaka*), a term that here seems to denote a wayward form of renunciant. Likewise in *Prātihārya-sūtra*, the various "heretics" (*tīrthika*) who attempt to defeat the Buddha in a competition of magical powers are referred to as "wandering mendicant heretics" (*tīrthikaparivrājakān* | Divy 146.19).

28. Adding to the confusion of sexualized and devotional discourse here is the ambiguity of this expression. It can also mean "like a saint"—more pointedly, like someone who is celibate. Speyer (1902: 359) may be right, though, in concluding that this is "another instance of the hortative particle *sādhu*, not being understood by copyists and leading them into error."

29. In the corresponding Tibetan (D nya 171a4), however, Mākandika's wife concludes that "This is not a husband who will love our daughter," just as she does in the five times that follow.

30. The Buddha makes this clear in his response to Mākandika:

Since one who is deluded desires sense objects,
he may long for your daughter, O brahman,
for she is beautiful and attached to sense objects.
In this respect a man not free from attachment is quite deluded.

But I am a buddha, best of sages, active [in the world],
who has obtained awakening, auspicious and unsurpassed.
Just as a lotus is undefiled by drops of water,
I live in the world completely undefiled.

And just as a blue lotus in muddy water
is in no way defiled by mud,
In just this way, O brahman, I live in the world,
totally separate from sense pleasures.

yasmād ihārthī viṣayeṣu mūḍhaḥ sa prārthayed vipra sutāṃ tavemām |
rūpopapannāṃ viṣayeṣu <saktām>[a] *avītarāgo 'tra janaḥ pramūḍhaḥ* ||
ahaṃ tu buddho munisattamaḥ kṛtī prāptā mayā bodhir anuttarā śivā |
padmaṃ yathā vārikaṇair aliptaṃ carāmi loke 'nupalipta eva ||
nīlāmbujaṃ kardamavārimadhye yathā <na>[b] *paṇkena vanopaliptam* |
tathā hy ahaṃ brāhmaṇa lokamadhye carāmi kāmeṣu vivikta [*eva*][c] ||
Divy 519.25–520.7 ||

[a]Following Cowell and Neil's query (Divy 519n10). Divy 519.27, *śaktām*.
[b]Following Cowell and Neil's query (Divy 520n2). Divy 520. 4, *ca*.
[c]Following Cowell and Neil's query (Divy 520n3).

31. A famous example of this confusion is Gianlorenzo Bernini's statue of Saint Teresa. She is clearly aroused, though it is unclear whether that arousal is due to erotic or spiritual love.

32. In *The Art of Seeing: An Interpretation of the Aesthetic Encounter*, Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi and Rick Robinson (1990: 178) describe the aesthetic experience

as "an intense involvement of attention in response to visual stimulus, for no other reason than to sustain the interaction." It is this autotelic quality of the experience that differentiates it from a disengaged transaction within a visual economy—the automated and impersonal—and marks it as something "characterized by feelings of personal wholeness, a sense of discovery, and a sense of human connectedness" (1990: 178).

33. Divy 334.17–18, *so 'paścime yāme gāḍhanidrāvaṣṭabdhaḥ śayitaḥ*.

34. These erotic associations of *prasāda* are also found in its modern Hindi usage. For example, Hardev Bahri's *Rajpal English-Hindi Dictionary* (1999) contains the following entry: "**buxom** *bak sam* a. (of a woman) gay, frolicsome *prasannacitt, moṭi evaṃ ākarṣak*." Here the physical attributes of a woman's sexuality are defined not as generating "*prasāda* of mind" (*prasannacit*) but as being "*prasāda* of mind," eliding the difference between the object and the state that it engenders as well as any notion of mental intermediation. Being buxom is also akin to being "plump" (*moṭi*) and "attractive" (*ākarṣak*). Like *prāsādika* objects, it draws things in; it is the agent of action.

35. As Susan Sontag (1966: 11) writes, "Ideally, it is possible to elude interpreters in another way, by making works of art whose surface is so unified and clean, whose momentum is so rapid, whose address is so direct that the work can be . . . just what it is. Is this possible now? It does happen in films, I believe."

36. Philip Lutgendorf (1995: 230–231) makes a similar point in describing the tendency of the televised *Sāgar Rāmāyan* "to periodically halt the flow of its narrative to focus on stylized, posterlike tableaux, accompanied by devotional singing" which functioned "as a visual distillation for the contemplation of devotees." According to Lutgendorf, contemplating this visual distillation led many viewers to experience *bhakti*, which in modern Hinduism, unlike in the *Divyāvadāna* (e.g., Divy 1.7–17, 231.23–232.3), is thought to be spiritually efficacious.

37. For example, "Now the Blessed One was self-controlled, and his followers were self-controlled . . ." (*atha bhagavān dānto dāntaparivāraḥ* | Divy 125.24–126.13, 182.1–20, 267.14–268.5, etc.).

38. For example, "He was free from attachment in the three realms [of desire, form, and formlessness] . . ." (*traidhātukavītarāgaḥ* | Divy 180.25–28, 240.23–27, 282.1–5, 492.4–8, etc.).

39. Such elisions occur for the above description of the Buddha (Divy 96.16–18) as well as for the description of arhats (Divy 18.26, 341.1, 342.6, 344.24, etc.).

40. The Blessed One, it is said, "is a tathāgata, an arhat, a perfectly awakened being, perfect in knowledge and action, a sugata, a knower of the world, an unsurpassed guide for those in need of training, a teacher of gods and mortals, a buddha, and a blessed one" (*tathāgato 'rhan samyaksaṃbuddho vidyācaraṇasaṃpannaḥ sugato lokavid anuttaraḥ puruṣadamyasārathiṃ śāstā devamanuṣyāṇāṃ buddho bhagavān* | Divy 344.5–7; cp. 54.12–14, 141.17–19, 242.2–4, 246.5–7, 254.4–6, 282.20–22, etc.; and in abbreviated form, Divy 347.1, 464.15, etc). In some of these instances, the first three of these epithets—tathāgata, arhat, perfectly awakened being—are skipped.

41. Divy 196.24–197.1, 290.11–13, 470.5–8, etc, *ity api sa bhagavān*.

42. On the connection in the Pali materials between the practice of *buddhānusmṛti* and the *iti pi so* verse, a corresponding list of epithets minus the term *tathāgata*, see *Visuddhimagga* vii.2–67 (Vism 198–213; trans. in Ñāṇamoli 1979: 206–230); Harrison 1992a: 215–219; and Hallisey 1988 ii, 208–261.

43. Divy 78,9, 78.15, 78.23, etc., *nāsya samā bhavanti yo.*

44. GM iii 1, 78.1, *śataṃ sahasrāṇi suvarṇaparvatā meroḥ samāḥ.*

45. Divy 84.24, *sāmantakena śabdo visṛtaḥ*. This trope of of "word having spread" (*śabdo visṛtaḥ*) also occurs with regard to the *prasāda*-intiated gift of a brahman's daughter in the *brāhmaṇadārikā-avadāna*. There, however, no mention is made that this spreading of the word leads to an increase in the status of the brahman's daughter. All that is said in the text is that the woman's husband is furious at the Buddha because he thinks that he has consciously lied in order to get food.

46. Abhidh-sam 16.7–8, *śraddhā katamā | astitvaguṇavattvaśakyatveṣvabhisaṃpratyayaḥ prasādo 'bhilāṣaḥ | chandasaṃniśrayadānakarmikā.*

47. Abhidh-sam-bh 5.10–12, **astitve** *'bhisaṃpratyayākārā śraddhā |* **guṇatve** *prasādākārā |* **śakyatve** *'bhilāṣākārā śakyaṃ mayā prāptuṃ niṣpādayituṃ veti*. For another translation of Sthiramati's commentary, see Guenther 1976: 64.

48. My thanks to John Dunne for sharing the as-yet-unpublished translation of the text that he has done with J. B. Apple. For a previous translation, see Guenther and Kawamura 1975.

49. John Dunne (personal communication) notes that this order is quite common in later Tibetan texts, as is the appearance of *adhimukti* in place of *abhilāṣa*.

50. In the *Candraprabhabodhisattvacaryā-avadāna*, for example, King Candraprabha offers his head to a beggar. As he explains to the various deities who try to thwart him, "Right here in this Maṇiratnagarbha (Containing the Most-Treasured Jewel) Park of yours, I have sacrificed my head thousands of times, and no one has obstructed me. Therefore, deity, do not obstruct this man who begs for my best limb! For it was right here, deity, that I sacrificed myself to a tigress and left Maitreya behind. The bodhisattva Maitreya, who had set out forty ages ago, was surpassed with a single sacrifice of my head" (*asminneva te maṇiratnagarbha udyāne mayā sahasraśaḥ śiraḥparityāgaḥ kṛto na ca me kenacid antarāyaḥ kṛtaḥ | tasmāt tvaṃ devate mamottamāñgayācanakasyāntarāyaṃ mā kuru | eṣa eva devate sapṛṣṭhībhūto maitrīyo yo vyāghryā ātmānaṃ parityajya catvāriṃśatkalpasaṃprasthito maitreyo bodhisattva ekena śiraḥparityāgenāvapṛṣṭhīkṛtaḥ* | Divy 326.6–11)! Cf. *Gilgit Buddhist Manuscripts* (Vira and Chandra 1995: 1504.4 ff.); cited in Hartmann 1980: 265–266.

51. Divy 180.21–22, *tena yujyamānena ghaṭamānena vyāyacchamānena.*

52. As Lauren Berlant (2007: 757) notes, "We persist in an attachment to a fantasy that in the truly lived life emotions are always heightened and expressed in modes of effective agency that ought justly to be and are ultimately consequential or performatively sovereign."

CHAPTER 7

1. Th-a i, 147, *yo kho, vakkali, dhammaṃ passati, so maṃ passati | yo maṃ passati, so dhammaṃ passati*. This saying is also found in other Pali sources, and as Alex

Wayman (1970: 28) notes, "the Mahāyāna equivalent to this is found in many places." See SN iii, 120 (trans. in Bodhi 2000: 939); It 91 (trans. in Woodward 1948: 181); Mil 71 (trans. in Horner 1969: i, 97); and Mp i, 249. For more on this passage, see Strong 1992: 81.

2. See SN iii, 119–124; trans. in Bodhi 2000: 938–941.

3. As Kevin Trainor (1997: 183) observes, however, the version of the Vakkali story in the *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā* "presents a rather different message about the religious value of viewing the Buddha's body." In that account, Vakkali spends all his time as a monk staring at the Buddha, so the Buddha sends him away for the rainy season to jolt him into understanding. Vakkali is distraught at this measure, and after three months of this deprivation he decides to commit suicide by throwing himself off Vulture's Peak. Knowing that Vakkali will destroy his chances for liberation along with himself, the Buddha "released an image [in his likeness] in order to display himself [to Vakkali]. From the moment [Vakkali] saw the Teacher, his great weight of sorrow was abandoned" (*attānaṃ dassetum obhāsaṃ muñci* | *ath' assa satthu diṭṭhakālato paṭṭhāya tāvamahanto pi soko pahīyi* | Dhp-a 118). The Buddha then recites a verse for Vakkali that explains that "the monk with an abundance of joy who has *pasāda* in the teaching of the Buddha shall attain the state of peace . . ." (*pāmojjabahulo bhikkhu pasanno buddhāsane adhigacche padaṃ santam* | Dhp-a 119). Having been filled with intense joy and pleasure, Vakkali then springs into the air, where, face to face with the Buddha, he attains arhatship. Though this version of the story likewise reiterates the dangers of being attached to seeing the Buddha, it also shows this act of seeing to be beneficial. Furthermore, it incorporates the discourse of *saddhā* into the familiar typology of *prasāda*. This raises intriguing questions about why this postcanonical commentary, which according to Burlingame's (1969: i, 57) hypothesis dates to 450 CE, glosses a verse from the *Dhammapada* about *pasāda* with a story about *saddhā*.

4. Commenting on the aphorism in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*, Bhikkhu Bodhi (2000: 1080n168) remarks, "Though the second clause seems to be saying that simply by seeing the Buddha's body one sees the Dhamma, the meaning is surely that in order to *really* see the Buddha one should see the Dhamma, the truth to which he awakened" (italics in original). In the *Divyāvadāna*, however, to *really* see the Buddha requires no such reworking.

5. Divy 49.5–6, *sahadarśanāc cānena bhagavato 'ntike cittam abhiprasāditam*.

6. Divy 49.17–19, *eṣo 'gro me bhikṣavo bhikṣūṇāṃ mama śraddhādhimuktānāṃ yad uta vakkalī bhikṣur iti*. Though *saddhādimutta* also occurs in the *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā* (Dhp-a 118), it may be that *śraddhādhimukta* is a mistake for *śraddhāvimukta*—that is, "released through *saddhā*"—for the latter is a common epithet in Pali. As Ludowyk-Gyomroi (1947: 43) notes, making reference to the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (AN i, 120), "to be *saddhāvimutta* does not necessarily mean that one is an arahant." This epithet, therefore, could apply to Vakkali.

7. For more on this two-body theory of the Buddha, see Demieville 1934; Harrison 1992b; Lancaster 1974; and Reynolds 1977.

8. Divy 19.2–4, *dṛṣṭo 'smābhir upādhyāyaḥ paryupāsitaś ca gacchāmo vayaṃ bhagavantaṃ paryupāsiṣyāmahe*.

9. Divy 19.4–5, *draṣṭavyā eva paryupāsitavyā eva hi tathāgatā arhantaḥ samyaksaṃbuddhāḥ*.

10. Divy 19.10–12, *dṛṣṭo mayopādhyāyānubhāvena sa bhagavān dharmakāyena no tu rūpakāyena gacchāmy upādhyāya rūpakāyenāpi taṃ bhagavantaṃ drakṣyāmi*. For another gloss on this passage, see Harrison 1992a: 55.

11. Divy 19.13–14, *durlabhadarśanā hi vatsa tathāgatā arhantaḥ samyaksaṃbuddhās tad yathā audumbarapuṣpam*. The *udumbara* (or *uḍumbara*) tree—that is, *Ficus glomerata* or the wild fig—doesn't produce flowers; its sprouts turn directly into fruit. In chapter 7 of the *Lalitavistara* it is written that the blossoming of an *udumbara* and the arising of a buddha on earth are similarly uncommon occurrences (Mitra 1998: 129 and 154n48). As Strong (1979a: 225n10) remarks, "the *uḍumbara* was thought to flower only once every 3000 years and so became a metaphor for a rare event."

12. Following GM iii 4, 188.4–5, read *āryasya tūṣṇībhāvenātināmitavān*. Divy 20.19, "They accepted [each other] in noble silence" (*āryeṇa tūṣṇībhāvenādhivāsitavān*).

13. This may represent a mis-Sanskitization of the Pali form *Aṭṭakavaggika*—that is, *The Book of Eights*. See Lévi 1915: 413 and Bapat 1951. The corresponding passage from the *Gilgit Manuscripts* (GM iii 4, 188.9–10) reads "as well as *The Verses of Śaila, The Sage's Verses, The Elder Monk's Verses, The Elder Nun's Verses*, and *Discourses Concerning the Goal*" (*śailagāthāmunigāthāsthaviragāthāsthavirīgāthārthavargīyāṇi ca sūtrāṇi*). For details regarding these texts, see Lamotte 1988: 156–163 and Lévi 1915: 401–425.

14. Divy 20.21–28, *pratibhātu te śroṇa dharmo yo mayā svayam abhijñāyābhisaṃbudhyākhyātaḥ | athāyuṣmañ chroṇo bhagavatā kṛtāvakāśaḥ <aśmāparāntikayāsvaraguptikayā>*[a] *udānāt pārāyaṇāt satyadṛṣṭaḥ śailagāthā munigāthā arthavargīyāṇi ca sūtrāṇi vistareṇa svareṇa svādhyāyaṃ karoti | atha bhagavāñ chroṇasya koṭikarṇasya kathāparyavasānaṃ viditvā āyuṣmantaṃ śroṇaṃ koṭikarṇam idam avocat | sādhu sādhu śroṇa madhuras te dharmo bhāṣitaḥ praṇītaś ca yo mayā svayam abhijñāyābhisaṃbudhyākhyātaḥ*.

[a] Following GM iii 4, 188.8–9. Divy 20.22–23, *asmāt parāntikayā guptikayā*.

15. The same set of texts mentioned plus *The Elder Monk's Verses* (*Sthaviragāthā*) is also declared to be the word of the Buddha by a group of merchants in the *Pūrṇa-avadāna* (Divy 34.29–35.2). As their boat is crossing the ocean, those merchants loudly recite passages these texts. When the caravan leader Pūrṇa hears them, he says, "Gentlemen, you sing beautiful songs" (*bhavantaḥ śobhanāni gītāni gāyatha* | Divy 35.3). To this the merchants reply, "Caravan leader, these aren't songs! This is the word of the Buddha" (*sārthavāha naitāni gītāni kiṃtu khalv etad buddhavacanam* | Divy 35.3–4)! As Joel Tatelman (2000: 85n57) notes, "These include what may be the earliest datable Buddhist texts."

16. If my guess is correct that Aśmāparāntaka designates an area in what is now Maharashtra, the Buddhist practitioners that are referred to in this region may be a branch of the Sarvāstivādins. There is evidence of such a presence during the reign of the Sātavāhanas (Mirashi 1981: 144), and this could even be an indication that Mūlasarvāstivādins were there as well. Certainly possible is that a branch of the Sarvāstivādins in the north—Mūlasarvāstivādin or otherwise—would be interested in rules governing another branch of their order in another region. All this is complicated,

however, by the fact that variants of this story with variations in this place name occur in different vinayas. As Waldschmidt (1967a: 150–151) has noted, in the Pali *Vinaya* we find Avanti-Dakkhiṇāpatha; in the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya*, Aśmaka-Avanti; in the *Dharmagupta-vinaya* and *Mahīśāsaka-vinaya*, Aśva-Avanti; and in the *Mahāsāṃghika-vinaya*, Śuna, or following Lévi (1915: 410, 416), Śroṇa-Aparānta, a conjunct formed with the main character's name. Cf. Lamotte 1949–1980: 546–47n3.

Even without a precise understanding of the area being referred to, this account does raise some interesting questions for Buddhist cultural history: Why do these separate vinayas and the *Divyāvadāna* all make reference to a set of monastic regulations in what appears to be an outlying region? Why is the list of questions that Koṭikarṇa asks so uniform in a variety of vinayas and yet the place that these questions concern so different? Why does the *Koṭikarṇa-avadāna* in particular contain such variation with regard to this place name, as though the compiler(s) or scribe(s) were not aware of any place like Aśmāparāntaka?

17. *Vinaya*, Mahāvagga, v. 13 (Vin i, 194–197; trans. in Rhys Davids and Oldenberg 1987: ii, 32–40 and Horner 1969–1975: ii, 1–11). A very similar account to this also occurs in the *Udāna* (Ud 57–59; trans. in Masefield 1994a: 100–105).

18. Vin i, 195, *suto yeva kho me so bhagavā ediso ca ediso cā 'ti, na ca mayā sammukhā diṭṭho | gaccheyyāhaṃ bhante taṃ bhagavantaṃ dassanāya arahantaṃ sammāsaṃbuddhaṃ sace maṃ upajjhāyo anujānātīti.*

19. Vin i, 195, *dakkhissasi tvaṃ Soṇa taṃ bhagavantaṃ pāsādikaṃ pasādanīyam.*

20. Vin i, 196, *paṭibhātu taṃ bhikkhu dhammo bhāsitun ti.*

21. Although an oral/aural culture is manifest in Pali materials (Collins 1992 and Cousins 1993), seeing the Buddha—that is, receiving his *dassana* (Skt., *darśana*)—also plays an important, though often under-acknowledged, role. For example, in T. W. Rhys Davids and Hermann Oldenberg's translation of the Pali *Vinaya*, they render Kuṭikaṇṇa's decision "to go and see the Blessed One" more loosely as "to go and visit the Blessed One" (1987: ii, 33).

22. This assessment, however, may be premature. What I know about the Koṭikarṇa story in other vinayas (i.e., the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya*, the *Mahīśāsaka-vinaya*, the *Dharmagupta-vinaya*, the *Mahāsāṃghika-vinaya*) is gleaned from Sylvain Lévi's (1915: 405–412) citations and summaries of their Chinese translations. Lévi, though, is primarily concerned with the various texts that Koṭikarṇa recites in the Buddha's presence. In addition, following the variants of this story can be quite trying. The Koṭikarṇa narrative tends to blend and merge with other stories in a variety of traditions. Kuṭikaṇṇa, as G. P. Malalasekara (DPPN, s.v. *Soṇa-Kuṭikaṇṇa*) notes, "is evidently identical with Pāṭihīrasaññaka of the Apadāna." Then, in the version of the story in the *Mahāsāṃghika-vinaya*, Koṭikarṇa's teacher isn't Mahākātyāyana, but Pūrṇa, the hero of the *Pūrṇa-avadāna*, so that both *Koṭikarṇa-āvadāna* and the *Pūrṇa-avadāna* are fused together (trans. in Tatelman 2000: 200–205; cf. Lévi 1915: 410–411 and Tatelman 2000: 23–24).

23. Following the Chinese sources, Mukhopadhyaya (1963) reverses the order of the second and third avadānas in his edition of the Aśoka cycle, and Strong (1989) does as well in his translation of the stories, so that *Kunāla-avadāna* follows the *Vītāśoka-avadāna* instead of preceding it.

24. My analysis of the Aśoka stories owes much to the work of John Strong, particularly his translation and study of the *Aśokāvadāna* (Strong 1989).

25. For more on the *cakravartin* ideal, see Reynolds 1972 and Collins 1998: 414–496. Strong (1989: 49–56) also discusses this with particular reference to Aśoka.

26. As Steven Collins (1998: 418) rightly observes, "It would be a mistake to treat . . . [Buddhist texts in Pali], or (as is more often the case) passages within them conceived separately as 'proof-texts,' simply in a documentary fashion, and to forget that texts have work-like aspects, which supplement material realities imaginatively in a critical or reflective, sometimes deliberately inconclusive and open-ended way. Irony, *inter alia*, escapes the essentialist."

27. Divy 382.4 (= Aśokāv 71.1), *sa idānīm acirajātaprasādo buddhaśāsane*. Generally one has *śraddhā* and not *prasāda* in the Buddha's teachings.

28. Divy 387.12 (= Aśokāv 79.1), *tvad darśanān me dviguṇaprasādaḥ saṃjāyate*.

29. Divy 389.25 (= Aśokāv 82.5), *dhanyās te kṛtapuṇyāś ca*.

30. Divy 389.27 (= Aśokāv 82.7), *rājñaḥ prasādavṛddhyartham*.

31. Divy 390.4–6 (= Aśokāv 82.14–15),

naivāsikā yā ihāśokavṛkṣe saṃbuddhadarśinī yā devakanyā |
sākḍḍād asau darśayatu svadehaṃ rājño hy aśokasya manaḥ[a]*prasādavṛddhyai* ||

[a]Cowell and Neil (Divy 390n2) suggest omitting *manaḥ*, and Mukhopadhyaya (Aśokāv 82.15) deletes it in his recension of the text. Since *manaḥ* breaks meter, it is likely a later addition. My sense is that *manaḥprasāda* is meant to function here in the same way as the much more common *cittaprasāda*. As I mentioned previously, there are peculiarities in the Aśoka cycle of stories regarding the term *prasāda*.

32. Divy 390.19–20 (= Aśokāv 83.4–5), *bhagavato jāyamānasya śrīr babhūva*.

33. Divy 390.20 (= Aśokāv 83.5), *na śakyaṃ mayā vāgbhiḥ saṃprakāśayitum*.

34. Divy 392.19 (= Aśokāv 86.5), *api paśyema nāgendraṃ yena dṛṣṭas tathāgataḥ*.

35. Divy 392.28–29 (cp. Aśokāv 86.13–14),

ākhyāhi me daśabalasya guṇaikadeśaṃ |
tat kīdṛśī vada bhavan sugate tadānim[a] ||

[a]Aśokāv 86.13 reads, "Tell me what the glory of the Sugata was like at that time" (*tat kīdṛśī vada hi śrīḥ sugate tadāniṃ*).

36. Divy 393.1 (= Aśokāv 86.15), *na śakyaṃ vāgbhiḥ saṃprakāśayitum*.

37. Cf. Strong 1979a: 225n11.

38. For more on this "corporeality of words," see Mitchell 1994: 151–182.

39. Divy 389.17 (= Aśokāv 81.17), Divy 390.27 (= Aśokāv 83.11), Divy 391.4–5 (= Aśokāv 83.17–18), Divy 391.6 (= Aśokāv 83.19), Divy 391.7 (= Aśokāv 84.1), etc.

40. Divy 394.10–13 (cp. Aśokāv 88.10–11),

lokaṃ sadevamanujāsurayakṣanāgam akṣayyadharmavinaye matimān vinīya |
<vaineyasattvavirahād upaśāntabuddhiḥ>[a] *śāntiṃ gataḥ paramakāruṇiko maharṣiḥ* ||

[a]Following Cowell and Neil's suggestion (Divy 394n2) and Aśokāv 88.11. Divy 394.12, *vaineyasattvavirahānupaśāntabuddhiḥ*.

41. Divy 394.14 (= Aśokāv 88.12), *śrutvā ca rājā mūrchitaḥ patitaḥ*.

42. Divy 394.20–21, *ayaṃ mahārāja sthaviraśāriputrasya stūpaḥ <kriyatām>*[a] *asyārcanam*. It is ambiguous, however, whether Upagupta is asking the king to honor Śāriputra or to honor the stūpa, for the term *asya* could refer either "to him" or "to it."

[a]Following Aśokāv 88.18. Divy 394.21, *kriyatam*.

43. Divy 394.25–26 (= Aśokāv 89.1–2),

sarvalokasya yā prajñā sthāpayitvā tathāgatam |
śāriputrasya <prajñāyāḥ>[a] *kalāṃ nārhati ṣoḍaśīm ||*

[a]Following Aśokāv 29.2. Divy 394.26, *prajñāyā*.

44. Divy 394.27–395.2 (cp. Aśokāv 89.4–7),

saddharmacakram atulaṃ yaj jinena pravartitam |
anuvṛttaṃ hi tat tena śāriputreṇa dhīmatā ||
kas tasya sādhu buddhānyaḥ puruṣaḥ śāradvatasyeha |
jñātvā guṇagaṇanidhiṃ vaktuṃ śaknoti niravaśeṣāt ||

45. Divy 395.3–4 (cp. Aśokāv 89.8), *prītamanāḥ sthaviraśāradvatīputrastūpe śatasahasraṃ dattvā*.

46. Divy 395.14 (= Aśokāv 89.19), *pūjanīyaḥ prayatnena*.

47. Divy 396.11–12 (= Aśokāv 91.7), *alpecchabhāvān na kṛtaṃ hi tena yathā kṛtaṃ sattvahitaṃ tad anyaiḥ*.

48. Divy 396.20–21 (= Aśokāv 91.14), *śrutasamudraḥ*.

49. Divy 397.3 (= Aśokāv 92.6), *dharmapradīpo jvalati prajāsu kleśāndhakārāntakaro yad adya*.

50. The presence of donation boxes at shrines in South Asia has now become so common that they almost seem to be attributes or necessary markers that attest to a shrine's formal status as *shrine*. Since it is now *doxa* in much of South Asia that one should make offerings at shrines, the establishment of a donation box at a site indicates that place's venerability just as the proverbial red carpet does for an individual.

51. Divy 397.17–21 (= Aśokāv 93.2–5), *yāvad rājñāśokena jātau bodhau dharmacakre parinirvāṇe ekaikaśatasahasraṃ dattaṃ tasya bodhau viśeṣataḥ prasādajāta iha bhagavatānuttarā samyaksaṃbodhir abhisaṃbuddheti | sa yāni viśeṣayuktāni ratnāni tāni bodhiṃ preṣayati*.

52. Divy 397.22–23 (= Aśokāv 93.7–8), *ayaṃ rājā mayā sārdhaṃ ratim anubhavati <viśeṣayuktāni>*[a] *ca ratnāni bodhau preṣayati*.

[a]Following Aśokāv 93.7. Divy 397.23, *viśeṣayuktāṃś*.

53. Divy 398.6–7 (= Aśokāv 93.18), *dṛṣṭvā nv ahaṃ taṃ drumarājamūlaṃ jānāmi dṛṣṭo 'dya mayā svayambhūḥ*.

54. Divy 398.22 (= Aśokāv 94.13), *satkāradvayam uttamam*.

55. Divy 393.18 (= Aśokāv 87.2–3), *asmin pradeśe*.

56. For more on Aśoka's encounter with Piṇḍola, see Strong 1979b: 82–86.

57. Divy 400.1–2 (= Aśokāv 96.9–10), *asti kaścit buddhadarśī bhikṣur dhriyata iti*.

58. Divy 400.3 (= Aśokāv 96.12), *buddhadarśī tiṣṭhata iti*.

59. Divy 400.7–10 (= Aśokav 96.16–17),

lābhaḥ paraḥ syād atulo mameha mahāsukhaś cāyam anuttamaś ca |
paśyāmy ahaṃ yat tam udārasattvaṃ sākṣād bharadvājasagotranāma ||

60. Divy 400.13 (= Aśokav 96.19–97.1), *rājahaṃsa iva*.

61. Divy 400.23 (= Aśokāv 97.10), *prīti*.

62. Divy 400.23–24 (= Aśokāv 97.10), *sthaviraṃ nirīkṣya*.

63. Divy 400.24–26 (= Aśokāv 97.11–13), *tvaddarśanād bhavati dṛṣṭo 'dya tathāgataḥ | karuṇālābhāt tvaddarśanāc ca dviguṇaprasādo mamotpannaḥ | api ca sthavira dṛṣṭas te trailokyanātho gurur me bhagavān buddha iti*.

64. Divy 401.5 (= Aśokāv 98.1), *sthavira kutra te bhagavān dṛṣṭaḥ kathaṃ ceti*.

65. Divy 401.11–12 (cp. Aśokāv 98.7–8),

tatkālam āsaṃ tatrāhaṃ saṃbuddhasya tadantike |
yathā paśyasi māṃ sākṣād evaṃ dṛṣṭo mayā muniḥ ||

66. Divy 401.15 (= Aśokāv 98.11) and Divy 401.23 (= Aśokāv 98.19), *tatkālaṃ tatraivāham āsam*. Cf. Divy 401.23 (= Aśokāv 98.19), *tatkālaṃ tatraivāsam*.

67. Divy 402.5 (= Aśokāv 99.6), *na tāvat te parinirvātavyaṃ yāvad dharmo nāntarhita iti*.

68. Divy 402.22 (= Aśokāv 99.19), *prasāditvā*.

69. Divy 403.3 (= Aśokāv 100.9–10), *buddhasmṛtipratibodhitaḥ*. As a translation of the Chinese rendering of this passage, Mukhopadhyaya (Aśokāv 100n10) offers, "Having produced in me the thought of meditation on Buddha."

70. Strong (1989: 261) translates this as "You show yourself out of compassion, and that redoubles my faith."

71. Divy 400.16–17 (= Aśokāv 97.4), *pratyekabuddhāśrayam*.

72. Divy 402.19–20 (= Aśokāv 99.16–17), *ahaṃ tat kālaṃ <tatraivāsam>*[a].

[a]Following Mukhopadhyaya's emendation. Mss. (Aśokāv 99n15) and Divy 402.19–20 read *tatraivāsīt*.

73. Divy 402.16–19 (= Aśokāv 99.13–16), *ayaṃ dārako varṣaśataparinirvṛtasya mama pāṭaliputre nagare 'śoko nāma rājā bhaviṣyati caturbhāgacakravartī dhārmiko dharmarājā yo me śarīradhātukaṃ vaistārikaṃ kariṣyati caturaśītidharmarājikāsahasraṃ pratiṣṭhāpayiṣyati*.

74. Cf. AN i, 109–110; trans. in Woodward and Hare 1932–1936: i, 94 and Bodhi 2005: 115–116; cited in Strong 1989: 56n46.

75. Edgerton (BHSD) defines *dharmarājikā* as an "(edifice) which belongs to (serves for relics of) the king of the doctrine (= Buddha); a stūpa."

76. Divy 381.21 (Aśokāv 55.6).

77. Divy 369.1–2 (cp. Aśokāv 34.12–13),

maddhātugarbhaparimaṇḍita<jambuṣaṇḍam>[a]
etat kariṣyati narāmarapūjitaṃ nu[b] |

[a]Following Divy mss. and Aśokāv 34.12. Cowell and Neil emend to *jambukhaṇḍam*.
[b]Following Aśokāv 34.13. Divy 369.12, *narāmarapūjitānām*.

78. Divy 381.23–24 (Aśokāv 55.8–9), *yāvac ca rājñā 'śokena caturaśītidharmarājikā-sahasraṃ pratiṣṭhāpitaṃ dhārmiko dharmarājā saṃvṛttaḥ*.

79. Elsewhere, however, it is said that Piṇḍola and fifteen other great arhats were given special status as dharma protectors by the Buddha and instructed to guard the dharma until the end of the present world period. In response, these arhats made use of their magical powers and extended their lives in order to preserve and protect the dharma for posterity (cf. Strong 1979b: 52; Lévi and Chavannes 1916: 13).

80. In the *Mahāvaṃsa*, Aśoka celebrates a festival in eighty-four thousand newly created stūpas—each of which, presumably, constitutes a single *dharmarājikā*—and at the climax of the festival a miracle occurs called "the unveiling of the world" (*lokavivaraṇa*). As John Strong (2004: 139–140) explains, "In one Pali commentary, the unveiling of the world (*lokavivaraṇa*) is said to be the same as the miracle called 'making the world bright' (*lokappasādaka*), an illumination that enables all beings to see one another from the highest heaven to the deepest hell" (BvA 46; trans. in Horner 1978b: 70). This miracle is *pāsādika* in the sense of "making bright," but also perhaps in the sense of "faith inducing." In the *Milindapañha*, Strong (2004: 140) notes, "the lokavivaraṇa at the time of the Buddha's descent from heaven is presented as an occasion for laypersons to realize the four noble truths. This would seem to amount to a vision of the dharmakāya."

81. Divy 389.3 (= Aśokāv 81.6), *kena bhagavān bhavanto nārcayitavyaḥ prayatnena*.

82. Divy 389.4–6 (cp. Aśokāv 81.7–9), *sthavirāyaṃ me manoratho ye bhagavatā buddhena pradeśā adhyuṣitās tān arceyaṃ cihnāni ca kuryāṃ paścimasyāṃ janatāyām anugrahārtham*.

83. Divy 389.10 (cp. Aśokāv 81.10), *sādhu sādhu mahārāja śobhanas te cittotpādaḥ*.

84. Aśoka has a "shrine" (*caitya*) constructed where the Buddha was born in Lumbīni (Divy 390.24, Aśokāv 83.9), where the nāga king Kālika praised the Buddha (Divy 393.6, Aśokāv 87.1), at the Bodhi tree (Divy 393.15, Aśokāv 87.7), and where the Buddha passed into final nirvāṇa in Kuśinagarī (Divy 394.16, Aśokāv 88.14).

85. For a full translation of this encounter between Upagupta and Māra, see Strong 1989: 185–198. Strong follows Mukhopadhyaya's edition (Aśokāv 15–28).

86. Divy 359.26–28 (= Aśokāv 22.2–3), *na ca buddhāv aropitānām akuśalānāṃ dharmāṇām anyat prakṣālanam anyatra tathāgataprasādād eva*.

87. Divy 360.9–10 (= Aśokāv 23.1), *sa buddhaprasādāpyāyitamanāḥ suciraṃ buddhaguṇān anusmṛtya sthavirasya pādayor nipatya*.

88. Divy 360.13 (= Aśokāv 23.5–6), *kaḥ samaya iti*.

89. Divy 360.17 (= Aśokāv 23.9–10), *māraḥ sasambhrama uvāca | prasīda sthavira kim ājñāpayasīti*.

90. Divy 360.19–21 (= Aśokāv 23.12–13),

> *dharmakāyo mayā tasya dṛṣṭas trailokyanāthasya |*
> *kāñcanādrinibhas tasya na dṛṣṭo rūpakāyo me ||*

91. Divy 360.21–22 (= Aśokāv 23.13), *iha vidarśaya buddhavigraham*.

92. Divy 360.24–28 (cp. Aśokāv 23.17–24.2),

sahasā tam[a] *ihodvīkṣya buddhanepathyadhāriṇam |*
na praṇāmas tvayā kāryaḥ sarvajñaguṇagauravāt ||
buddhānusmṛtipeśalena manasā pūjāṃ yadi tvaṃ mayi |
svalpām apy upadarśayiṣyasi vibho dagdho bhaviṣyāmy aham ||

[a]Aśokāv 23.17, "you" (*tvam*).

93. Divy 361.15–16 (= Aśokāv 24.16–17), *atha vyāmaprabhāmaṇḍalamaṇḍitam asecanakadarśanaṃ bhagavato rūpam abhinirmāya.*

94. Divy 361.22 (= Aśokāv 25.3–4), *bhagavato rūpam idam īdṛśam iti.*

95. Divy 361.27–28 (cp. Aśokāv 25.10–11), *sa buddhāvalambanatayā*[a] *smṛtyā tathāpy āsaktamanāḥ samvṛtto yathā buddhaḥ bhagavantam ahaṃ paśyāmīti.*

[a]Mukhopadhyaya (Aśokāv 25.10) reads *buddhāvalambitayā*. Vaidya (Divy-V 227.5) reads *buddhāvalambanayā*.

96. Divy 361.29–30 (= Aśokāv 25.12), *aho rūpaśobhā bhagavataṃ | kiṃ bahunā.*

97. Divy 362.16–21 (= Aśokāv 26.5–9), *saṃbuddhālambanaiḥ saṃjñāṃ vismṛtya buddhasaṃjñām adhiṣṭhāya mūlanikṛtta iva drumaḥ sarvaśarīreṇa mārasya pādayor nipatitaḥ*[a] *| atha māraḥ sasaṃbhramo 'bravīt | evaṃ taṃ*[b] *bhadanta nārhasi samayaṃ vyatikramitum | sthavira uvāca | kaḥ samaya iti | māra uvāca | nanu pratijñātaṃ bhadantena nāhaṃ bhavantaḥ praṇamiṣyāmīti.*

[a]The first half of this line is obscure. Strong (1989: 195) offers this translation: "Then Upagupta, because of his affection for the Wholly Enlightened One, forgot his agreement [with Māra], and thinking that this image *was* the Buddha, he fell at Māra's feet with his whole body, like a tree cut down at the roots."

[b]Aśokāv 26.7 emends to *tvam*.

98. Divy 362.22 (cp. Aśokāv 26.10–11), *sagadgadakaṇṭho 'bravīt | pāpīyan.*

99. Divy 362.26–27 (= Aśokāv 26.14–15),

api tu nayanakāntim ākṛtiṃ tasya dṛṣṭvā |
tam ṛṣim abhinato 'haṃ tvāṃ tu nābhyarcayāmi ||

100. Divy 363.1–4 (cp. Aśokāv 27.1–4),

mṛnmayīṣu pratikṛtiṣv amarāṇāṃ yathā janaḥ |
mṛtsaṃjñām[a] *anādṛtya namaty amarasaṃjñayā ||*
tathāhaṃ tvām ihodvīkṣya lokanāthavapurdharam |
mārasaṃjñām anādṛtya nataḥ sugatasaṃjñayā ||

[a]Mukhopadhyaya (Aśokāv 27.2) emends to *mṛtsaṃjñāntām*.

This sense of these verses is likewise unclear. Strong (1989: 19) translates them as follows: "Just as men bow down to clay images of the gods, knowing that what they worship is the god and not the clay, so I, seeing you here, wearing the form of the Lord of the World, bowed down to you, conscious of the Sugata, but not conscious of Māra."

101. Divy 363.7–10 (= Aśokāv 27.7–9), *yo yuṣmākaṃ svargāpavargasukhaṃ prārthayate sa sthaviropaguptasakāśād dharmaṃ śṛṇotu yaiś ca yuṣmābhis tathāgato na dṛṣṭas te sthaviropaguptaṃ paśyantv iti.*

102. Divy 363.11–18 (cp. Aśokāv 27.10–13),

utsṛjya dāridryam anarthamūlaṃ yaḥ sphītaśobhāṃ śriyam icchatīha |
svargāpavargāya ca yasya vāñchā sa śraddhayā dharmam ataḥ śṛṇotu ||
dṛṣṭo na yair vā dvipadapradhānaḥ śāstā mahākāruṇikaḥ svayaṃbhūḥ |
te śāstṛkalpaṃ sthaviropaguptaṃ paśyantu bhāsvattribhavapradīpam ||

103. For example, "With *bhakti* I venerate the son of Śāradvatī . . ." (*śāradvatīputram ahaṃ bhaktyā vande* | Divy 395.4 [= Aśokāv 89.10]); "With head bowed, I venerate the renowned Maudgalyāyana . . ." (*maudgalyāyanam ahaṃ vande mūrdhnā praṇipatya vikhyātam* | Divy 395.20 [cp. Aśokāv 90.2]); and "I venerate the elder Kāśyapa . . ." (*vande khalu kāśyapaṃ sthaviram* | Divy 396.1–2 [= Aśokāv 90.16]).

104. The most puzzling element of the practice described here occurs just before Upagupta falls prostrate at Māra's feet. There are three main confusions here. First, does *vismṛtya* mean "having forgotten" or is it connected more closely with *smṛti* as "awareness," perhaps in the sense of "having cleared away his awareness"? Second, why is *saṃbuddhālambanaiḥ* in the instrumental plural? The somewhat similar *buddhāvalambanatayā*, which occurred previously, though Mukhodpadhyaya and Vaidya both emend the compound, was in the instrumental singular to modify *smṛtyā*, but here the connection between *saṃbuddhālambanaiḥ* and the gerund *vismṛtya*, whatever it may mean, is grammatically more difficult to construe. Third, the gerund *adhiṣṭhāya* comes from the root *adhi* √*ṣṭhā*, which has a wide range of technical meanings in Buddhist Sanskrit, including "to control" and "to magically transform." This is a not an easy passage to translate confidently.

CHAPTER 8

1. For a sense of the vast quantity of such images, see Zwalf's (1996) excellent catalog of Gandhāran sculpture in the British Museum, Nagar's (1993) work on representations of the jātakas in Indian art, and Raducha's (1982) dissertation on the iconography of Buddhist relief scenes from Kuṣāṇa-period Mathura.

2. See, for example, Zwalf 1996: 127, 134, 183, 208, etc.

3. As David Morgan (1998: 26) explains, "The history of aesthetics since the eighteenth century has largely advocated disinterestedness as the basis for judgments of taste and artistic quality. The experience of beauty is characterized by a *noninstrumental enjoyment*, which means that an object is beautiful inasmuch as it possesses its reason for being within itself, inciting no form of desire or use beyond its own enjoyment" (italics added). For more on this "orientalist aesthetics," see Faure 1998: 770–774.

4. This is why Alfred Gell (1992: 42) thinks that "the first step which has to be taken in devising an anthropology of art is to make a complete break with aesthetics." This "methodological philistinism," as he terms it, "consists of taking an attitude of resolute indifference towards the aesthetic value of works of art—the aesthetic value that they have, either indigenously, or from the standpoint of universal aestheticism."

5. Though the former often served the latter, such was not always the case. As Richard Davis (1997: 21–23) notes, "Iconographic texts urged image makers to make their images as beautiful as they could, and devotional poets of the time repeatedly proclaimed the glorious beauty of their embodied gods. Aesthetic concerns were, however,

secondary to other criteria: iconographic correctness, completeness, ritual animation, and divine presence." Cf. Freedberg 1989: 397–398.

6. This teleology of art is most apparent in narratives concerning the first Buddha image. In the *Rudrāyaṇa-avadāna*, for example, the story is told of the creation of the first image of the Buddha: a painting of his shadow, whose sight causes King Rudrāyaṇa and his subjects to follow Buddhist teachings (Divy 548–551). Hsüan-tsang also tells of the creation of the first Buddhist image, likewise produced at the bidding of King Udayana (= Rudrāyaṇa), though in this version it is a sandalwood statue. When the Buddha meets this likeness of himself, the statue arises and venerates him. At that time the Buddha declares, "The work expected from you is to toil in the conversion of heretics, and to lead in the way of religion future ages" (Beal 1906: i, 236). For more on the karmic effects of these Buddha images, see Jaini 1979; Wickramagamage 1984; Handurukande 1982; and Lancaster 1974. For more on the anthropology of aesthetics and its importance to the study of art, see Coote 1992.

7. In what follows, I use the term *narrative art* and its counterpart *iconic art*, though they can be misleading even as purely descriptive terms. According to Wu Hung (1992b: 130), "In a narrative painting the principal figures are always engaged in certain events, acting and reacting to one another. The composition is thus essentially self-contained, and the significance of the representation is shown in its own pictorial context. The viewer is witness, not a participant. In an iconic scene, the central icon, portrayed frontally as a solemn image of majesty, ignores the surrounding crowds and stares at the viewer outside the picture. The composition is thus not self-contained; although the icon exists in the pictorial context *within* the composition, its significance relies on the presence of a viewer or worshipper outside it."

8. By contrast, later Buddhist narrative art in South Asia is more accessible and readable. In his work on the temple wall paintings of King Kīrti Śrī Rājasinha, an eighteenth-century king from the up-country Ceylonese kingdom of Kandy, John Holt (1996: 93–94) describes the "visual liturgy" that these images constitute. Notice the difference in the placement and usage of these similarly narrative images: "My argument here is simple: that more than any other form of cultic religious expression, these paintings clearly illustrate, *through their obvious accessibility*, not only the fundamental mythic history of Theravāda Buddhist tradition but also the basic behavioral actions and cognitive tenets that explain what it meant to be Buddhist during this time . . . These paintings provided the means by which a visual understanding of Buddhism could be achieved, *without the intervention of sermons preached by monks* or the authoritativeness of an ancient language (Pali) in largely undistributed hallowed texts" (italics added).

9. Hans Belting (1994) makes much the same point about sacral images in Europe in his detailed work, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*. As is suggested in the title itself and then made explicit by Belting (1994: xxii) in the foreword, "My book does not explain images nor does it pretend that images explain themselves. Rather, it is based on the conviction that they reveal their meaning best by their use."

10. This idea that the Buddha is re-presented through these images raises a troubling issue that I alluded to earlier. In the *Pāṃśupradāna-avadāna*, the Buddha isn't just

re-presented or made present again, but is re-presented to Upagupta, made present to him again. Yet, if Upagupta has never seen the Buddha before, how can he say that Māra's impersonation of the Buddha is "just like the form of the Blessed One?" If this notion of re-presenting the Buddha's presence was in any way normative, then there must have been a citationality of the narrative tableaus on Buddhist monuments. If the Buddha was to be re-presented, and not just presented to those who had never seen him when he was alive, there must have been a known referent, something to which the viewer could key in. There must have been a known visual tradition of the Buddha image.

One possibility is that these images of the Buddha were to a certain extent self-referential, and in that capacity necessarily looked familiar. In *Visual Piety*, David Morgan makes a similar argument for Warner Sallman's famous "Head of Christ," a painting from 1940 of a blue-eyed Jesus that has become the authentic Christ for many American devotees. It is "an exact likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1998: 34), one elderly informant remarks. As Morgan explains, Sallman's painting of Christ has come to be treated as though it were a photograph of Christ precisely because it encapsulates all the aspects of Jesus that its American viewers have learned to associate with him through their literature and devotional practices. But this matching of real and ideal, of visual image and mental image, only occurs because of an intense inculturation period of a particular iconic tradition. Perhaps this was also the case for the writers and listeners of the Aśoka stories. Maybe the separate schools of Buddhist art were insular and self-perpetuating, hoping to produce unique visions of the Buddha that were said to be more efficacious than their counterparts.

11. Many have followed Paul Mus's (1935: preface) argument that stūpas for the Buddha were regarded as the Buddha himself. As Vidya Dehejia (1998: 22) writes, "Buddhist pilgrims visited a stupa mainly to experience the unseen presence of the Buddha through proximity to his relics enshrined deep within the mound." Carrying on Mus's legacy, Jonathan Walters (1997: 175) claims that the *Apadāna, Buddhavaṃsa*, and *Cariyāpiṭaka* "confirm Mus' thesis entirely . . . the *Apadāna* texts about *stūpa* (and Bodhi tree) worship echo unmistakably Mus' view that the worshiper regards the *stūpa* as though it were the Buddha or as the Buddha himself, who never died but was transformed into a *saṃsāric* collection of bones and books and an (unknowable) *nirvāṇic* state." For more on Buddha's presence in absentia, see Kinnard 1999: 25–44.

12. Jonathan Walters suggests that these images may not have been enlivening icons but instead the byproducts of ritual celebrations. Walters argues that Buddhist stūpas were sites for festivals, and during their celebration, certain texts were recited, such as the *Apadāna, Buddhavaṃsa*, and *Cariyāpiṭaka*. It is in this context, he maintains, that the representations on these stūpas should be understood. As Walters (1997: 171) explains, "Illustrations of various sorts of royal festivals abound in the extant carvings, although they all have been considered representations of the same handful of historical stories: all royal processions are Ajattasattu's relic march, all royal tree worship is Aśoka's bodhi pūjā, etc. The truth may be far more straightforward that: these are illustrations of the very festivals that have left as traces of their occurrence precisely the carvings, stūpas, and texts in question."

13. Schopen (1997: 258–289) likewise argues that the central image in cave 16 at Ajanta, an iconic image of the Buddha, was a functional stand-in for his presence. As Brown (1997: 73) notes, it was "considered the actual person of the Buddha in residence in the vihāra." Iconic images and narrative images, however, particularly when the former are visible and the latter are not, do not necessarily share the same function. For more on the role of Buddha images among the Mūlasarvāstivādins, see Schopen 1997: 238–257 and 2005.

14. Stanley K. Abe has proposed much the same for the narrative paintings in Cave 254, a Chinese Buddhist cave temple from the Magao cave complex near Dunhuang in northwest China. He suggests that these paintings "were utilized in conjunction with oral presentations" and that they may have functioned as "a visual aid for sermons or other forms of illustrated teachings" (1990: 11, 12).

15. See also Hirakawa 1990: 273. However, while there are images of apparent stūpa veneration from Bharhut (Dehejia 1989: 13) and elsewhere from Gandhāra (e.g., Ingholt and Lyons 1957: plates 155, 157), none of these images, to the best of my knowledge, display any engagement with the narrative art that decorated the railing, arches, and pillars around these stūpas. Representations of the use or function of narrative are absent.

16. In his account of the paintings at Dunhuang, Wu Hung well describes this ambiguity with regard to the function of narrative images. Making reference to one image, he explains that "it would be impossible for a picture at that particular location in a dark cave chamber to serve any kind of oral recitation" (1992b: 134). And with regard to the murals depicting the "subjugation of demons," he explains that trying to read these scenes "our eyes and mind would spin until we got totally dizzy and finally gave up" (1992b: 136). But he also explains elsewhere that there were images at Dunhuang that may have been "visual aids [that] accompanied *sutra* lectures . . . [for] it was hoped that *sutra* lectures and *sutra* painting would arouse the worshipper's emotional response through a display of images and stories" (1992a: 56).

17. As Susan Buck-Morss (1992: 22–23) notes with regard to Walter Benjamin, "Phantasmagorias are technoaesthetics. The perceptions they provide are 'real' enough—their impact upon the sense and nerves is still 'natural' from a neurophysical point of view. But their social function is in each case compensatory. The goal is manipulation of the synaesthetic system by control of environmental stimuli . . . These simulated sensoria alter consciousness, much like a drug, but they do so through sensory distraction rather than chemical alteration, and—most significantly—their effects are experienced collectively rather than individually. Everyone sees the same altered world, experiences the same total environment. As a result, unlike with drugs, the phantasmagoria assumes the position of objective fact."

18. Since these stories are narrated in multiple sources, however, it is often difficult to determine which version of the story is being told.

19. An example of a quite successful negotiation of these problems is Michael O'Hanlon's *Paradise: Portraying the New Guinea Highlands* (1993), a work meant to accompany an exhibit of Wahgi materials of the same name at the British Museum. O'Hanlon manages to surmount easy dichotomies—colonial and post-colonial, diaspora

and nostalgia, authenticity and improvisation—and use Wahgi material culture as a means of exploring the complexities of Wahgi experience and practice.

20. Nancy Munn's work on the sand stories of the Walbiri people of Central Australia exemplifies the complex ways that images and narratives can complement each other. "In sand storytelling," Munn (1973: 87) writes, "the speaker does not enact the events to which a tale is thought to refer, but creates fleeting graphic images of it on the sand . . . 'attributes' of the sand . . . as part of the narrative process." Though these images are iconic, as David Freedberg (1989: 56) explains, they only "relate figuratively to what they are supposed to represent."

21. Wu Hung, for example, in his work on the Dunhuang murals, which also contain representations of Buddhist narratives, proposes that "(1) devotional art is essentially an art of image-making rather than image-viewing, and (2) the process of image-making has its own logic that differs from those found in writing and oral recitation" (1992: 137). The artisans who produced these images, he explains, were working within a visual logic—quite different from the narrative logic of the stories—that was inspired by the constraints of image making. At times this visual logic constitutes a recognizable aesthetic, such as the "oppositional composition" (1992: 148). Elsewhere it seems that an irregular sequence of scenes "may have resulted from a deliberate effort to increase the dramatic effect of the story by rearranging the events" (1992: 145). Cf. Shih 1993. Quite possibly, the narratives in words and images built off each other, the artist extending the narrative, the narrator extending the art, both working to create the stories that we now have.

22. In his work on Sepik art in Lowland New Guinea, Anthony Forge describes how Abelam painters do not distinguish figurative and abstract elements in their work. Even when figuration is "apparently" present in their painting, as in the likenesses of men's faces, these painters vigorously deny any figurative intent or figurative content to their work. "Two-dimensional painting for the Abelam," Forge (1973: 177) explains, "is a closed system having no immediate reference outside itself." And within this system, "graphic elements modified by colour, carry the meaning. The meaning is not that a painting or carving is a picture or representation *of* anything in the natural or spirit world, rather it is *about* the relationship between things" (1973: 189). In this case, the dichotomy between abstract and figurative is clearly misleading. See also Freedberg 1989: 452–453.

23. For example, see Vidya Dehejia's (1991) work regarding the multivalence of aniconic emblems on Indian Buddhist sites, Susan Huntington's (1992) rejoinder, and then Dehejia's (1992) response.

24. Uttarar 13, *ammo jāṇāmi tassiṃ jevva padese tassiṃ jevva kāle vattāmi* [*ammo jānāmi tasminn eva pradeśe tasminn eva kāle varte*].

25. Uttarar 13/i.18, *samayaḥ sa vartata ivaiṣa*. Likewise Uttarar 21/i.33.

26. Uttarar 18, *ayi viprayogatraste citram etat*.

27. As Sheldon Pollock (1998: 121) notes with regard to the tradition of *rasa* aesthetics, "the literary text can be analyzed either internally or externally, on the one hand, that is, as representations *of* men and women, and on the other, as representations *for* men and women," with the former coming to life in the actualization of the latter.

Hence, "readers [and viewers] participate in the emotional life of the characters, and this participation would not be possible unless they themselves in some sense shared the primary emotions, for example, and partook of the predisposition to respond in similar ways to similar objects and conditions. Obviously the reader's response to a character cannot be absolutely identical to the character's response itself, but, just as obviously, it is intimately related." See also Granoff 2000.

28. In the *Mahābhāṣya*, the grammarian Patañjali likewise writes that in the context of storytelling with pictures, the historical present may be used while narrating past events. As Victor Mair (1988: 18) explains, paraphrasing Patañjali, "it is proper to use the present tense, even though these events took place in the remote past, because the *śaubhika* ('illusionists') and *granthika* ('reciters) represent them as actually happening in front of the audience." In short, past events are re-presented as though occurring in the present, and the audience is transformed into devotees. For more on this tradition, see Mair 1988: 17–38.

29. See Lamotte 1988: 77 and Strong 1985: 866. Although I cannot find any images from Gandhāra of monastics explaining Buddhist images to a lay audience, paintings of this kind do exist from Japan. See, for example, Moerman 2005: color figure 9. In that image, as Moerman (2005: 222) writes, "the nun is explaining the painting's content with the aid of a feather-tipped pointer before a group of women; her young assistant holds an alms cup out for donations." For an interesting parallel, see Bhikkhu Buddhadasa's (1968) explanation of illustrations from Thai Buddhist manuscripts. Though the introduction claims that "every Buddhist, of course, no matter what his native speech may be, can read the gestures portrayed by a Buddhist image like a universal sign language" (1968: 2), the astute explanations that follow offer ample testimony to the converse.

30. Divy 80.4, 166.20–21, 271.16–17, etc., *buddhanimnā dharmapravaṇāḥ saṃghaprāgbhāraḥ*.

31. In the *Supriya-avadāna*, these three terms are given a more tangible sense in a description of three mountain summits "whose slopes are tapered, gradually getting steeper and narrower as they rise" (*anupūrvanimnāny anupūrvapravaṇāny anupūrvaprāgbhārāṇi* | Divy 113.15).

32. Using a stained-glass window in the apse of the Cathedral at Canterbury as an example, Norman Bryson (1981: 6) explains the difference between these two terms as follows: "By the 'discursive' aspect of an image, I mean those features which show the influence over the image of language—in the case of the window at Canterbury, the Biblical texts which precede it and on which it depends, the inscriptions it contains within itself to tell us how to perceive the different panels, and also the new overall meaning generated by its internal juxtapositions. But the 'figural' aspect of an image, I mean those features that belong to the image a visual experience independent of language—its being-as-image. With the window this would embrace all those aspects we can still appreciate if we have forgotten the stories of the Grapes of Eschol and of the last plague of Egypt, or are not at all familiar with the techniques of 'types' and 'antitypes,' but are nonetheless moved by the beauty of the window as light, colour, and design."

33. This division, though, is also problematic. There are multi-scenic narrative murals, such as the one of the Siṃhala story in cave 17 at Ajanta, and there are mono-scenic

narratives, such as the various Gandhāran sculptures representing the *Jyotiṣka-avadāna*, and it isn't clear that they served the same ritual purposes or shared the same aesthetic. For example, images from the *Jyotiṣka-avadāna* represent the moment when the physician Jīvaka delivers the would-be Jyotiṣka from a lotus that grows from his mother's womb, though she lies burning on her funeral pyre (Burgess 1900: 35, plate 10; Comstock 1926: 26; Foucher 1905–1951, i, 526, figure 259, Group III (iv); Härtel 1981; Ingholt and Lyons 1957: 85–86 and plate 122; and Majmudar 1987: plate vii, b [= Sharma 1987: plate 5]). But is the story of the entire avadāna important or just this particular iconic moment? And what purpose did a sculptural freeze/frieze frame of this moment accomplish? Then again, considering the structural layout of the image from the Mathura Museum, with the Buddha standing on the right, the smaller Nirgrantha standing on the left, and Jīvaka bending down to remove Jyotiṣka from a fiery lotus in the middle, perhaps the viewer was meant to reflect on good, evil, and karmic destiny.

34. Wu Hung likewise suggests that certain images at Dunhuang were used for the ritual of *guanxiang* or "visualizing the icon." In such practices, "a worshipper visualizes the true images of the Buddha and bodhisattva in his mind's eye, often by initial concentration on a painted or sculpted image" (1992a: 56).

35. Uttarar 127/vi.11, *āścaryam | virodho viśrāntaḥ prasarati raso nirvṛtidhanas tad auddhatyaṃ kvāpi vrajati vinayaḥ prahvayati mām | jhaṭity asmin dṛṣṭe kim iva paravān asmi yadi vā mahārghas tīrthānām iva hi mahatāṃ ko 'py atiśayaḥ ||*

Later, act six shows that words alone are equally emotive. At Rāma's request, Lava recites verses from Vālmīka's *Rāmāyaṇa* that memorialize Rāma's exploits. These have a profound effect on Rāma. When he hears of the love that he and Sīta shared, he responds, "Aah! Exceedingly cruel is this blow to the vitals of my heart" (*kaṣṭam atidāruṇo 'yaṃ hṛdayamarmodghātaḥ* | Uttarar 137)! And when he hears words that he himself had said to Sīta as a precursor to their amorous pleasures, the stage instructions say that he is "smiling bashfully, with affection and pathos" (*salajjāsmitasnehakaruṇam* | Uttarar 139).

36. See also Cousins 1983 and von Hinüber 1993.

37. For more on the connection between the Mahāyāna and the advent of writing, see Gombrich 1990; Lopez 1995; and McMahan 2002.

38. Divy 3.17–18, 26.11, 58.16, 100.1, 486.2, etc., *lipyām upanyastaḥ*.

39. Divy 170.12–13, *sa lipyakṣarācāryasyākṣarāṇi śikṣayitum upanyastaḥ*.

40. Divy 171.3, *lekhaśālā*.

41. Divy 475.24–25, *mātāpitarau susnātaṃ suviliptaṃ sarvālaṃkāravibhūṣitaṃ kṛtvā . . . lipiṃ prāpayante*.

42. Divy 301.16–17, *lipyām upanyasto lipyakṣareṣu ca kṛtāvī saṃvṛttaḥ*.

43. Though Sahasodgata never writes anything in the story, immediately after he is described as an expert scribe, he goes to a monastery and sees a wheel of existence with two verses below it that the Buddha had instructed "should be inscribed" (*lekhayitavyam* | Divy 300.20) there. Sahasodgata asks the monk in charge what is "inscribed" (*abhilikhitam* | Divy 301.19) there, and the monk explains the contents of the wheel of existence, answering Sahasodgata's numerous questions about the representations before him, but makes no reference to the verses. But why proclaim Sahasodgata's literacy and then show him to be unable to understand the image inscribed on the monastery wall

and unaware of the verses below it? The connection here is unclear, but it does show that literacy was not a sufficient skill to interpret Buddhist images, even those images with verses inscribed beneath them. As I mentioned before, a guide is needed.

44. Divy 486.2–8, *tadā lipyām upanyastaḥ | tasya <sid>*[a] *ukte dham iti vismarati | atha tasyācāryaḥ kathayati | brāhmaṇa mayā prabhūtadārakāḥ pāṭhayitavyāḥ | na śakṣyāmy ahaṃ panthakaṃ pāṭhayitum | mahāpanthakasyālpam ucyate prabhūtam gṛhṇāti asya tu panthakasya <sid>*[a] *ukte dham iti vismarati*[b] *| brāhmaṇaḥ saṃlakṣayati | <na>*[c] *sarve brāhmaṇā lipyakṣarakuśalā bhavanti vedabrāhmaṇa eṣa bhaviṣyati.*

[a]Following the Tibetan (D nya 63a2), read *sid*. Divy 486.2 and 486.5, *sīty*.

[b]The Tibetan (D nya 63a2) adds, "and when he says *dham* he forgets *sid*" (*dham rjod na sid brjed bar byed do*).

[c]Following Cowell and Neil's suggestion (Divy 486n3) and the Tibetan (D nya 63a4). Divy 486.7, (omitted).

45. Divy 486.9–10, *tasya om ity ukte bhūr iti vismarati bhūr ity ukte om iti vismarati.*

46. Divy 486.13–14, *na sarve brāhmaṇā vedapāragā bhavanti jātibrāhmaṇa evāyaṃ bhaviṣyatīti.*

47. Divy 495.15, *āyuṣmato na kaścid aprasāditaḥ.*

48. Divy 495.19–21, *eṣo 'gro me bhikṣavo bhikṇūṇāṃ mama śrāvakāṇāṃ cetovivarta-kuśalānāṃ yad uta panthako bhikṣuḥ.*

49. After being "entrusted [to a teacher to learn] writing," according to the stereotyped passage, one then learns "arithmetic, accounting, matters relating to trademarks, and to debts, deposits, and trusts" (*saṃkhyāyāṃ gaṇanāyām mudrāyām*[a] *uddhāre nyāse nikṣepe* | Divy 3.18–19, 26.11–12, 58.16–17, 100.1–2, etc.). For more on this standardized education and its connection with mercantilism, see Nilakantha Sastri 1945: 9–10 and Roy 1971: 152–158.

[a]Sastri (1945: 9–10) explains that "mudrā means 'money,' and the term seems to stand here for a knowledge of different types of money in use in commerce and rates of exchange." As Roy (1971: 153) notes, however, "since mudrā means also a seal, it also might include the knowledge of different trade-marks impressed on seals and sealings during that time." In that regard, see Divy 32.24, "he affixed his seal [to the merchandise]" (*svamudrālakṣitaṃ ca kṛtvā*).

50. There is a passage in the *Mākandika-avadāna*, however, that seems to tell of laywomen transcribing Buddhist texts or taking notes from them. In response to a query from Mākandika, the father of one of her cowives, Queen Śyāmāvatī explains that she needs nothing for herself but that the women in her harem could use his help—"These girls study the word of the Buddha at night by lamplight. For this they need birchbark paper, oil, ink, reed pens, and brushes" (*etā dārikā rātrau pradīpena buddhavacanaṃ paṭanti atra bhūrjena prayojanaṃ tailena masinā kalamayā tūlena*[a] | Divy 532.9–11).

[a]The Tibetan (D nya 189a6) reads *shing bal* —> Skt., <*tūla*>, affirming Cowell and Neil's emendation. Mss. (Divy 532n3), *bhūlena*.

51. For more on the origins of writing in India, see Griffiths 1999: 34–40 and von Hinüber 1990.

52. For more on the nature and spread of Buddhist Sanskrit, see Brough 1954; von Hinüber 1989; and Mishra 1993. The latter contains transcripts of some fascinating

conversations that occurred during the International Symposium on the Language of Sanskrit Buddhist Texts (1991) in Sarnath.

53. This appropriation of the language of hegemonic Brahmanism marked a radical transformation not only for Buddhism but for Sanskrit itself. According to Sheldon Pollock (1996: 206), "What is historically important [about this period] is not that newcomers from Iran and central Asia should begin to participate in the prestige economy of Sanskrit—other groups had long sought and found incorporation in Indian cultural communities—but rather that Śakas, Kuśānas and the Buddhist poets and intellectuals they patronized begin to turn to Sanskrit as an instrument of polity and the mastery of Sanskrit into a source of personal charisma."

54. As Ray (1994: 52) notes, "In Aśvaghoṣa's life of the Buddha, it is significant that it is not just the laity who receive darśan [Skt., *darśana*] from the Buddha but also renunciants, gods, and even animals. For the renunciants in particular, darśan plays a crucial role: for the sage Asita, who sees the Buddha just after his birth, for the ascetics in the hermitage, for the Buddha's five former companions, and for Mahākāśyapa, darśan is a vehicle to knowing who the Buddha really is, and in these cases darśan represents a decisive experience. The gods similarly come, at the times of the great events in the Buddha's life, to receive darśan from him . . . [Darśan] enables one to know the Buddha, commune with him, and actively participate in his charisma—experiences that rouse those who see him to faith, to spontaneous acts of devotion, and to insight."

55. For a critique of Ong's technological determinism, see Griffiths 1999: 28–32; Fabian 1983: 118–123; Finnegan 1988: 59–85; and Street 1984. Also noteworthy is Don Kulick and Christopher Stroud's detailed case study from a village in the lower Sepik region of Papua New Guinea that challenges the notion that literacy has a reified agentive power. They demonstrate "how individuals in a newly literate society, far from being passively transformed by literacy, instead actively and creatively apply literate skills to suit their own purposes and needs" (1990: 287).

56. A common sight in airports that cater to passengers from a variety of language groups—what Walter Kirn (2001) refers to as "airworld"—is not only multilingual signs, but signs that try to surmount linguistic difference by representation in pictographs: the image of a suitcase for baggage claim, a taxi and a bus side by side for transportation, a man with arms akimbo and a woman in a skirt for the men's and women's bathroom, etc.

57. As Susan Sontag (1966: 11) writes, "Ideally, it is possible to elude interpreters in another way, by making works of art whose surface is so unified and clean, whose momentum is so rapid, whose address is so direct that the work can be . . . just what it is. Is this possible now? It does happen in films, I believe."

58. For more on the visual traits of the *Lotus Sūtra*, which was written in Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit in the early centuries of the Common Era, see Wang 2005.

59. For a book-length compilation of such images that shows the hellish results that one experiences in the next life as a consequence of bad deeds in this one, see the Jain scholar Vijayajinendrasurisvarajī's *Naraki Citravali* (1984). My thanks to Steven Heim for a copy of this book.

60. Divy 131.13–14, 191.19–20, 282.17–18, 311.22–23, 504.23–24, 582.4–5, 584.20–21, etc.,

na praṇaśyanti karmāṇi kalpakoṭiśatair api |
sāmagrīṃ prāpya kālaṃ ca phalanti khalu dehinām ||

EPILOGUE

1. Divy 1.4–5, 24.11–12, 98.17–18, 108.10–11 etc., *āḍhyo mahādhano mahābhogaḥ*.

2. Similarly, the 2007 Mercedes S-Class features the advertising tag line "You're Not Buying a Car. You're Buying a Belief." My reading of the advertisement is that when buying one of these luxurious and expensive cars, belief is the primary commodity, for just as gold bespeaks a form of trust in the *Divyāvadāna*, so too with a new Mercedes. And here too the belief is in a gold standard of the social world, a sociodicy that legitimizes one's wealth and privilege in society. Alex Gellert, president and CEO of the company that designed the advertisement, explains that the print campaign articulates "in straightforward language the 'proof points' that make the brand 'Unlike Any Other' " (http://www.emercedesbenz.com/Jan06/31NewMercedesAdCampaign.html).

3. See, for example, Atherton 1992; Frank 2000; Long 2000; Loy 1997; Nelson 2002; and Sedgwick 1999.

4. See Kaza 2005 and, for example, Beaudoin 2003 and Miller 2004.

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